ART ROUTES: LOCATING SECOND-GENERATION BLACK CARIBBEAN CANADIAN WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

Using visual and performance art, music and photography, Art Routes: Locating Second-Generation Black Caribbean Canadian Women's Perspectives centers a specifically second-generation discourse using the artwork and lived experiences of second-generation Black women artists—Kamilah Apong, Sandra Brewster, Shaunasea Brown, Anique Jordan, Brianna Roye, Camille Turner and Shi Wisdom. By attending to the contours of Black life in the complex geographies of Toronto and beyond, Art Routes acknowledges and articulates how Black women artists provide blueprints for how Black people can create their own kinds of freedom. Through the nuanced position of second-generation be(long)ing, Art Routes captures the struggle of second-generation Black women artists to engage in new forms of world-making that reevaluate ideas about gender, sexuality, and citizenship, posit new radical strategies of care, and re/define how Black people live within and despite contexts of death and dying. With the understanding that the ability to create is a matter of life and death for Black people, Art Routes offers creative ways to think about Black being in Canada while identifying how Black Canadian women artists imagine and construct more inhabitable environments for themselves and their communities.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT..**ii**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS..**iii**

TABLE OF CONTENTS...**v**

LIST OF FIGURES..**viii**

[INTRODUCTION]
PROMOTING SECOND-GENERATION BLACK CARIBBEAN CANADIAN

WOMEN'S DISCOURSES..**1**

Theoretical Approaches..**10**

The Politics of Self-Reclamation..11

The Intersections of Womanist Thought and Black Canadian Feminisms........................13

The African-Canadian Diaspora: "The Weather" in "The After life of Slavery"............18

Methodology..**20**

Introducing the Artists..**23**

Selected Artwork..**30**

Chapter Breakdown...**32**

[CHAPTER ONE]
ART AS SURVIVAL PRACTICE: DEVELOPING A BLACK WOMEN'S ARTS

PRAXIS...**36**

The Four Principles of Black Women's Arts Praxis..**38**

I. *Art as Survival Practice*..38

II. *Art as Self-Love*...53

III. *Art as a Radical Care Ethic*..58

IV. *Art as Embodied History*..64

[CHAPTER TWO]
ART AS A RADICAL CARE ETHIC: UNCOVERING GENDERED RESPONSES TO BLACK CANADIAN COMMUNITY VIOLENCE..**76**

Young Gunner..78

Ban' Yuh Belly..95

[CHAPTER THREE]
ART AS SELF-LOVE: *"LOUD"* REPRESENTATIONS OF SECOND-GENERATION *BLACK* CARIBBEAN CANADIAN *QUEER* LIFE THROUGH MUSIC AND PHOTOGRAPHY..**112**

Out of Many, One People..115

"Out of Many, One People": Queering the Caribbean and Canada..123

To Darnelladon (and Beyond)..139

[CHAPTER FOUR]
ART AS EMBODIED HISTORY: ON SECOND-GENERATION BE(LONG)ING..**159**

Blur & Heirloom..160

Miss Canadiana..175

Bob Marley's "Waiting in Vain"–"Soulified"..191

[CONCLUSION]
SECOND-GENERATION BLACK WOMEN OF CARIBBEAN DESCENT CREATING A DIFFERENT KIND OF "CANADIAN/NESS"..**204**

Home Relationship Status: It's Complicated–Black Women Alternatives to Canadian Multiculturalism..........205

Toward Black Liberation via Second-Generation Black Caribbean Canadian Women's Art-Making..........215

WORKS CITED..........217

APPENDIX A – INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR ARTISTS..........243

APPENDIX B – SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS..........246

LIST OF FIGURES

1. Kamilah Apong on stage © Darnell Reddick....24

2. Sandra Brewster's headshot © Jalani Morgan....25

3. Anique Jordan's headshot © Liz Ikiriko....26

4. Brianna Roye's headshot © Josef Adamu....27

5. Camille Turner's headshot © Ebti Nabag....27

6. Instagram photo of Shi Wisdom © Shi Wisdom....28

7. Patrick "BJ" Brown Jr. at Nia Centre for the Arts, 2020....55

8. Hellshire Beach, Portmore, Jamaica, 2018....72

9. "Young Gunner" still – Shi Wisdom, Black men & boys, 2014. © Mark Valino....78

10. Screenshot of google search, 2022....81

11. "Young Gunner" still – Boy watching game of chess, 2014 © Mark Valino....82

12. "Young Gunner" still – Boy traversing Parkdale street, 2014 © Mark Valino....82

13. Collage of "Young Gunner" stills – An array of Black men and boys, 2014 © Mark Valino....84

14. "Young Gunner" still – Toppled over chess game, 2014 © Mark Valino....86

15. "LoveSpeak" still – Wisdom family barbershop, 2011 © David F. Mewa....91

16. Ban' Yuh Belly Gallery Installation View, 2019. Courtesy of Anique Jordan....................95

17. “Now,” Ban' Yuh Belly, 2019. Courtesy of Anique Jordan....................100

18. "Malvern," Ban' Yuh Belly, 2019 Courtesy of Anique Jordan....................107

19. Cassandra & Tee. Out of Many, One People, 2019 © Brianna Roye....................117

20. Kamilah Apong. Out of Many, One People, 2019 © Brianna Roye....................103

21. R. Flex. Out of Many, One People, 2019 © Brianna Roye....................131

22. Tattooed hands. Out of Many, One People, 2019 © Brianna Roye....................139

23. “To Darnelladon (and Beyond)” Tush still – Kamilah Apong emitting an explosion of Technicolor, 2018 © Victoria Long....................146

24. “To Darnelladon (and Beyond)” Tush still – Kamilah Apong in a winged cape, 2018 © Victoria Long....................151

25. “To Darnelladon (and Beyond)” Tush still – Double image of Kamilah Apong holding a rotary telephone © Victoria Long....................155

26. “To Darnelladon (and Beyond)” Tush still – Repeating image of Kamilah Apong © Victoria Long....................157

27. "Blur 18." Courtesy of Sandra Brewster....................162

28. "Untitled (Blur), 2017-2019," Optica centre d'art contemporain Installation view © Paul Litherland....................165

29. "Untitled, 2015 - 2016," Art Gallery of Ontario Installation view © Sandra Brewster and Georgia Scherman Projects....................169

30. "Heirloom," Token | Contemporary Ongoing, 2017. Courtesy of
Sandra Brewster..172
31. BJ's christening cake, 1994...173
32. Hometown Queen, (Re)Visions, Curated by Sally Frater, 2010.
Courtesy of Camille Turner...176
33. "Miss Canadiana" The Hamilton Spectator, 2015 © Kaz Novak.............................183
34. "Miss Canadiana" appearance in Broken Hill Australia, 2007
Courtesy of Camille Turner...189
35. "Miss Canadiana" at the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF).
Courtesy of Camille Turner...189
36. "Sugar Shack," 21 Group Exhibition, Curated by Elwood Jimmy, 2007.
Courtesy of Camille Turner...190
37. Shaunasea Brown at Bob Marley's house in Jamaica, 2016....................................194
38. A screenshot of "a nex bob one. soulified.…", Facebook, 2016..............................199

INTRODUCTION - PROMOTING SECOND-GENERATION BLACK CARIBBEAN CANADIAN WOMEN'S DISCOURSES

Scholarship on Black Canada is largely organized as either rooted in the long history of the descendants of enslaved Africans (Austin 2013; Cooper 2006; Thompson 1979; Walker 2012; Winks 2014) or in the more recent migrations from the 1950s and onward (Brand 1994; James and Davis 2012; Philip 2017; Walcott 2003). This dissertation extends this available analysis by drawing on the work of Black women visual and performance artists, photographers, singers and musicians in Toronto to address epistemological and empirical gaps, building upon and extending the extant body of scholarship through second-generation Black Caribbean perspectives. This dissertation argues that the artistic practices of second-generation Black Canadian women of Caribbean descent exemplify how Black women create the safe spaces they require to survive and thrive in a world that is largely inhospitable to them. In other words, the dissertation explores how Black Caribbean Canadian women artists "create worlds" (Turner, 2020), reflecting alternative reference points and possibilities for (re)articulating Black life.

These perspectives reflect the complex Black Canadian populations that are comprised of various overlapping histories and lived experiences (Brand et al. 1991; Campbell 2012; Flynn and Marrast 2008; Massaquoi and Wane 2007; Walcott, 2003). While this dissertation focuses on descendants of post-1950s English-speaking Caribbean immigrants in Toronto and surrounding areas, it also contests the ways in which heterogeneous Black Canadian populations are often reduced to this relatively recent immigrant group. Despite the influence of this Black and English-speaking Caribbean engagement of Canada, the multivalent spaces of Black Canada are made possible via entangled and complex notions of Blackness which extend beyond and across religion, language, sexuality and geography.

This work thus challenges a limited understanding of Black Canada by acknowledging how second-generation discourses intersect with and influence diverse expressions and performances of transnational Blackness. These diverse expressions include those from West and North-East Africa and are informed by the immigration policies that limited Black presence throughout Canada prior to the 1960s. My discussion of second-generation Black Canada, therefore, registers the interconnections among Black people who originate not only from the Caribbean, but the African continent, the United States and elsewhere and emerges from the long history of prior Black presence that includes Canadian-born descendants of enslaved Africans, as well as Black soldiers from the American Civil War and Black Refugees (Matsuoka and Sorenson 2001; Mensah 2010; Tettey and Puplampu 2005).

The second-generation perspectives, which are the primary focus of the dissertation, are those of Caribbean Canadians either born in Canada to Caribbean immigrant parents or who emigrated from the Caribbean during their early childhood. Second-generation experiences now constitute a significant proportion of Black experiences in Canada, with 38.4% of Ontario's Black population among the second generation (Statistics Canada, 2019). I ground these perspectives in the personal stories and creative work of Kamilah Apong, Sandra Brewster, Anique Jordan, Brianna Roye, Camille Turner, and Shi Wisdom, all of whom are second-generation Black Canadian women artists of Caribbean descent. As a pianist and singer who self-identifies as a second-generation Jamaican-Canadian Black woman of African descent, I, along with these six participating artists, contribute to the second-generation discourses that the dissertation engages. Together our artistic texts, lived-experiences, and voices demarcate a specifically second-generation discourse.

Our discourses illuminate the often-overlooked voices and imagination of Black women artists who bring a different set of issues to bear on the contemplation of Black life in Canada than their Caribbean immigrant parents. I specifically draw from the artistic contributions of the six participating Black Caribbean Canadian women artists with interest in how they collectively challenge public discourses that seek to limit the lives of Black Canadian women in Toronto, their surrounding communities, and Canada more broadly.

While it is impossible to entirely extrapolate this Toronto-centered research onto Canada as a whole, my dissertation strategically frames its analysis as instructive within a broader Canadian context. Gayatri Spivak (1990) notes that within deconstructive critical practice, at times it is not possible to escape essentializing. Deploying strategic essentialisms enables the production of wider societal critiques (51). Therefore, my decision to frame this Toronto-based second-generation analysis within the wider (Black) Canadian experience serves to challenge the normative perpetuation of Canadian identities solely within the context of whiteness (Chariandy 2018; Crawford 2007; Massaquoi 2007; Meikle 2013; Samuels 1997). My reading of Black women's artwork and lived-experiences as second-generation Caribbean Canadians marks this exclusion as an opening into another kind of possibility beyond the dictates of the white supremacist, settler colonial nation. While paying attention to how urban spaces are forged through processes of dislocation (Haritaworn et al. 2018), I suggest that these second-generation perspectives from Toronto illuminate how place and space are occupied, constructed, and imagined in Canada. In this sense, Toronto is not being framed as an absolute site but rather as a generative space for outlining "the heterogeneity of Black Canadian life" (Campbell 2012, 47).

This dissertation also follows Andrea Davis' (2017) idea of "mapping the visual contours of a Black Canada onto the city" (773), strategically positioning Toronto as instructive for understanding Black women's lives in a wider Canadian context.

Beyond this Canadian context, the nuanced second-generation perspectives in this work also center Black women artists' experiences to re/articulate Black life in the Caribbean. Tiffany Lethabo King (2019) outlines the close relationship between the Caribbean and Canada by stating that "[t]he Caribbean basin begat Canada," and specifically names Black and Indigenous women's bodies as integral for making Canada possible (196). King also elaborates on the close relationship between these localities by further sharing that, "[t]he violent rupture that created the time, space, and people of the Caribbean also created the Americas, including Canada," and underscores that the Caribbean must be imagined first prior to (re)imagining the Canadian landscape (196). Since Black people of Caribbean decent make up one of the most common ethnic groups in Canada in both first- and second-generation contexts (Statistics Canada, 2019), the Caribbean is crucial for thoughtful considerations about the extent to which "Canadianness is radically upended" by centering the Black Canadian subject as a "moving and rootless geographical subject emerging from the diasporic space of enslavement" (King 197).

My analysis of the Caribbean in relation to Canada is also influenced by Stuart Hall's (2012) recognition of the "tiny but important message for the world about how to negotiate identity" that is rooted in a specifically Caribbean context (4). By labeling the Caribbean as "the first, the original and the purest diaspora" (6), Hall identifies important stakes for this research concerning the possibilities and limitations of second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women artists' ability to navigate society in ways that both mirror and depart from first-generation experiences.

I argue that these artists contend with the complexities of place making and belonging in ways that exceed both first-generation immigrant attachments to place of origin and desire for participation in the Canadian nation.

The Toronto-based second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women artists I study, therefore, allow me in this work to register the unruliness of Black women's presence in Canada as a function in excess of the nation state. I analyze our complex and unruly position to shed light on discourses and experiences of displacement and to outline what our specific geographic location from within Canada suggests for broader understandings of Black life in Canadian and Caribbean contexts. Fundamentally preoccupied with the wider question of why Black women create, I seek to answer this question using second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women's artwork to identify other ways of being in the world that are rooted in the Black imagination. Situating my analysis within Black imaginaries allows me to explore how Black women create new ways of living that operate outside of white supremacist structures of racial capitalism and hetereopatriarchy. This work recognizes that second-generation relationships to the nation-state are often fraught and differ from, for example, a first-generation desire for a better life that depends on a construction of Canada as a land of opportunity. Andrea Davis (2022) outlines such generational differences by sharing that first-generation understandings of Canada are often rooted in racial capitalist desires that equate labour to wealth accumulation and perpetuate middle-class integrationist values. Davis further identifies second-generation experiences as lending a "critical and urgent lens to the project of Black life in North American cities," by modeling a "different relationship to the hegemonic nation," one that is not necessarily concerned with competitive forms of citizenship.

This different relationship instead shares interest in critiquing capitalist patriarchal constructs and the intersecting and interrelated forms of violence that Black and Indigenous, queer and trans people, and women face every day (130-133).

These second-generation perspectives offer new responses to Stuart Hall's (2012) claim that, "…questions of identity are always questions about representation. They are always questions about the invention, not simply the discovery of tradition. They are always exercises in selective memory and they almost always involve the silencing of something in order to allow something else to speak" (5). I am, therefore, interested in the specific ways that second-generation Black Canadian women's art facilitates capacious ways for the most marginalized in our society to speak and be heard. With interest in how we as second-generation Caribbean Canadians might live without silencing others, this dissertation turns to the arts to uncover new strategies that pay close attention to those silenced, forgotten and rendered disposable while sharing second-generation Caribbean Canadian ways of being as a method for living relationally.

My turn to the arts also engages in what Davis (2022), borrowing from Sylvia Wynter, identifies as a deciphering practice to illuminate how Black Canadian women artists "make knowable and potentially alterable the universalizing discourse of the nation-state in which Caribbean and African women are not yet constructed as fully human" (4). The central role that the arts play in my research also operates with the understanding that artistic creations concern matters of life and death for Black communities and are, therefore, "fundamentally essential to the survival of a semblance of humanity often denied to Afro-diasporic peoples" (Campbell 2021). This research follows what Campbell (2021) outlines as "art for our sake," where "Afro-diasporic artistic creativity in the wake of the transatlantic slave trade is more than a cultural expression.

By naming the arts as a method and system of knowledge designed to save lives, rehumanize those made chattel, and rearticulate innovative ways in which humanity might exist under the terror and duress of state-sanctioned anti-Blackness," he re/frames the immeasurable value of Black arts (Campbell 2021). The arts then are required to re/think Blackness otherwise and I place second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women artists at the center to outline how they themselves see the world and create the future on their own terms.

Ultimately, I argue that second-generation Caribbean women artists in Canada see art as critical to a politics of self-reclamation and a determination to live otherwise. Out of this artistic imperative, I delineate four principles of Black women's art praxis which emerge from my interviews and are grounded in second-generation Black Caribbean women's art practice in Toronto. The first principle, *art as survival practice*, operates with the understanding that the arts are necessary for the survival of Black communities. The ability to create, to imagine a different set of possibilities, is rooted in matters of life and death for Black people. With this grave understanding, I use this first principle to uncover what Black creative texts have the capacity to do following Katherine McKittrick's (2021) description of Black creative texts/praxes:

> One thing black creative text and black creative praxes do is illuminate narratives of black life and humanity and, at the same time, create conditions through which relationality, rebellion, conversation, interdisciplinarity, and disobedience are fostered. Thus, the text is not simply a representation; the text is bound up in acts of psychic and physiological rebellion and disobedience that continually unveil the limits of casting black knowledge as only emerging from the violated body. (51)

It is this recognition of the capaciousness of Black artistic texts that ground the four principles of Black women's art praxis I offer in this dissertation.

In documenting the existing "push to see blackness, black people, and black histories, and oppose racist domination by acknowledging the varying spaces of black lives or black geographies" (McKittrick 2006, 101), the first principle of *art as survival practice* shares McKittrick's interest in whether or not Black women's geographies can rethink and respatialize our socio-geographic present (122). The principle of *art as survival practice* thus centers Black Canadian women's geographies by promoting second-generation responses to what Syrus Marcus Ware (2020) notes as a "magical Black cultural renaissance" where Black Canadian creative practice is importantly centralized (Wingz and Ware, 136).

The second principle, *art as self-love*, encourages Black women to put themselves first by identifying strategies that Black women can and must use to recognize and celebrate the fullness of who they are because it is unlikely anyone else will. These self-led efforts again mirror McKittrick's (2006) description of Dionne Brand's poetics which "communicate the livability of the world through mapping it as a terrain that can publicly and creatively express blackness and black femininity" (138). Although McKittrick in this context is making specific reference to music and music-making, the principle of *art as self-love* maintains that all art forms can be deployed and used to help Black people (and Black women more specifically) survive and thrive despite being subject to anti-Black racism, sexism, homophobia, white supremacy, ableism, capitalism and the various overlapping gendered systems of oppression that try to stifle their lives every day. *Art as self-love* also borrows from the scholarship of Jennifer Nash (2013), bell hooks (2000), and Audre Lorde (1984) to promote Black women's cultivation of radical self-love.

The third principle of Black women's arts praxis, *art as a radical care ethic*, is specifically linked to the precarity of Black life in Canada and the wider African diaspora.

This principle is also rooted in community practices of care-work led by Black women and identifies how “black worlds and black ways of being breach the heavy weight of dispossession and loss because these narratives (songs, poems, conversations, theories, debates, memories, arts, prompts, curiosities) are embedded with all sorts of liberatory clues and resistances” (McKittrick 2021, 7). *Art as a radical care ethic* thus follows Christina Sharpe’s (2016) insistence that we pay attention to strategies that Black people use to insist on Black life in the wake of Black death by, for example, looking into ways that Black communities grieve to suggest new ways of caring for Black lives.

The last principle, *art as embodied history*, is interested in the histories that walk with us every day, those that are made possible by our very presence as second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women artists. I pay attention to various histories using this principle to identify how “enslaved and postslave subjects are tasked to imagine and live the world differently” (McKittrick 2021, 32). I use the poetry and theoretical concepts offered by Dionne Brand (2001), Christina Sharpe (2016), M. NourbeSe Philip (2008), and my mother Melody Brown (2013), to analyze how Black Caribbean Canadian women’s artwork/lived experiences operate in relation to the Door of No Return and the Middle Passage. This fourth principle also borrows from the work of Jacqui Alexander (2005), Hortense Spillers (1987), and Avery Gordon (2008) to illuminate the extent to which the artwork produced by second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women artists are directly tied to the wider histories of chattel slavery, settler-colonialism and their legacies.

The overall Black women’s arts praxis I provide recognizes the extent to which the arts become central for articulating second-generation strategies of world-making.

These combined artistic efforts facilitate critical entry points that contribute to, and expand, existing Black Canadian and African diasporic scholarship and offer insight into wider themes, such as the politics of identity and representation, grief, community violence, policing, systemic neglect, Black women's sexualities, collective memory, Black radical care ethics, and survival in ways that also critique and resist the violent anti-Black structures of the nation state. I use these principles to suggest that the visual and performance art, music, and photography by the artists studied demonstrate how Black women artists might provide blueprints for how (Black) people and wider communities can create their own kinds of freedom, while offering new ways of thinking about Black being in Canada and beyond.

Theoretical Approaches

The theoretical approaches I draw on are meant to clarify the concrete stakes of this dissertation which involve the affirmation of the close relationship between second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women's self-constructed identities and their creation of art as a means to survive and thrive in spite of anti-Black violence. As a second-generation Black Jamaican-Canadian woman artist, who also self-identifies as a Pan-African womanist, this dissertation is very much a practice of self-reclamation where I grapple with my own artistic practice, while in conversation with other second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women artists, to investigate the wider stakes of our collective artwork. I, therefore, theorize these second-generation perspectives using three thematic categories: the politics of self-reclamation; reflections on Alice Walker's (1983) womanism and Black Canadian feminisms; and considerations of the African-Canadian diaspora through Christina Sharpe's (2016) notion of "the weather" and Saidiya Hartman's (2007) theorization of "the afterlife of slavery."

The Politics of Self-Reclamation

I understand the politics of self-reclamation as constituting a dynamic space, place, process, and consciousness where Black people grapple with the awareness of the fallacies associated with constructions of Blackness, and (re)imagine alternative possibilities for Black life. In other words, this concept aims to conceptualize those transformative moments within Black experiences that intentionally work toward breaking free from modernist/anti-Black notions of the human (Alagraa 2018; Bogues 2012; Fanon 1967; Gilroy 1993; Hall 1993; Iton 2008; McKittrick "2016; Morrison 2004; Wynter 1995). These hegemonic constructions of an idealized human render Black women's experiences as legible only as a series of stereotypes, negating Black women's self-representation, sexuality, and understandings of self, more broadly. Self-reclamation is an attempt, therefore, to articulate what happens within transformational revelations, such as the moment Frantz Fanon describes in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967): "I sit down at the fire and I become aware of my uniform. I had not seen it. It is indeed ugly. I stop there, for who can tell me what beauty is?" (114). Like Fanon's intervention, the politics of self-reclamation is enmeshed between the conflicting values of one's sense of self and the internalized stereotypical ideas constructed by the wider society and projected onto Black people.

The driving force behind what compels us to think differently about ourselves and imagine Blackness otherwise is what I frame as the very genesis of self-reclamation. While my research focuses on second-generation Black Canadian women, I use Fanon here to demonstrate how self-reclamation has the capacity to operate across and beyond gendered categories. The fluid and nuanced theoretical foundation of this self-reclaiming politic is further identified in my expansion of Alice Walker's (1983) theory of womanism and my application of self-reclamation.

In framing self-reclamation as a useful process within the wider project of Black liberation, I am seeking to ensure that no one is left behind as a result of an inattentiveness to the diverse ways that Black women and Black queer and trans people self-fashion identities beyond and across gendered categories.

My establishment of a politics of self-reclamation stems from my first reading of Christina Sharpe's (2010) analysis of the im/possibilities of a redemptive history. In her chapter that describes how Sarah (Saartjie) Baartman's life is taken up in public discourse, Sharpe importantly asks, "[w]hat would it mean for this work to be for Baartman? Is redemption possible? How does such redemption really work? How is it effective? Are projects of speculative history different from those that seek redemption?" (73). The question of whether or not redemption is possible sparked my interest in colonial discourses about Black women's subjectivities and guided my thinking about what processes of decolonizing histories, like Baartman's, might offer, if anything, for Black women in the present. It is important to note that this challenging of Black women stereotypes is not one that allows for "injustice to be rewritten as freedom" as Sharpe (2010) warns (109). Rather than a politics of redemption, therefore, this dissertation conceptualizes a politics of self-reclamation to theorize how constructions of Blackness might be negotiated and transformed on an individual level through Black people's agency and art.

In addition to the questions outlined by Sharpe (2010) above, the politics of self-reclamation also considers the following questions: What is being reclaimed? What are the tools used to measure acts of self-reclamation? Are there concrete limits to the process that specifically indicate when the self has been reclaimed? In other words, is there a way to engage in a process of self-reclamation without running into cyclical traps?

Framing the politics of self-reclamation alongside what Kevin Quashie (2012) describes as quiet (personal desires, ambitions, fears and dreams), diminishes the likelihood of one being trapped in a never-ending politic of self-reclamation. Quashie's notion of quiet and my politics of self-reclamation as dual processes allow me to offer a more complex discussion about second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women's self-representations beyond resistance struggles and questions of belonging.

The Intersections of Womanist Thought and Black Canadian Feminisms

I also turn to Black feminist and womanist thought to further articulate these kinds of agentive practices. In this way, my arts-based analysis "…imagine[s] anew what human life could be like" according to the perspectives of second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women (Bogues 2012, 45). Black feminist and womanist scholarship, indeed, provide robust theories and praxes for understanding how Black women experience, process, and creatively shape the world. The term womanist was coined by Alice Walker (1983) to represent an alternate approach to feminist self-identifications that centers Black women's lived-experiences. In returning to Walker's early definition, I am interested, specifically, in the way that Walker frames the arts and artists as inextricably linked to a womanist activism thus providing an important foundation for the arts-based approach of this dissertation. I make this initial turn to Walker, therefore, to contend with how second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women artists and their artwork simultaneously make interventions into place and belonging, capture and respond to the precarity of Black life, imagine Black futures, and center Black Canadian women artists' voices to illuminate their capacity to change the world. While drawing on some aspects of Walker's work, however, I also note its limitation in the ways, for example, it is steeped in biological notions of gendered difference.

My research instead posits a Black women's arts praxis that disrupts these gendered constructs while offering creative ways to think about Black being in Canada and beyond.

I nonetheless find Alice Walker's (1983) womanist interventions useful in the way they center practices of art making as a critical aspect of womanist thought. Placing the arts at the center in this way makes important distinctions between normative understandings of the fine arts where art galleries and museums, for example, function as gatekeepers or conduits of culture, defining what constitutes legitimized art and routinely excluding work by Black artists (Adams 2020; Cahan 2016; Fatona 2018; Lee 2021; Nelson 2018). Walker's womanist lens instead centers Black women's artistic creations as a way of living which I read as a rejection of the western neoliberal capitalist consumption and construction of art.

In addition to borrowing, critiquing, and expanding Walker's (1983) womanist insights (developed further in chapter one), my dissertation is also grounded in a Black Canadian feminist tradition. The extent to which womanism is theorized in a Canadian context is limited, as it is often assumed to be either rendered within or used interchangeably with Black feminism (Flynn 2014; Norwood 2013; Reece 2007; Williams & Chau 2007). My research, however, understands womanism and Black feminism as two distinct, albeit interrelated, experiences, praxes and theories. My turn to womanist perspectives is not an attempt to "…replace feminism as a 'universal' voice of all" (Randall Tsuruta 3). Such a replacement is evidently impossible as womanist thought repeatedly engages Black feminist scholarship (Combahee River Collective 1986; Massaquoi 2007; hooks 2015; Hill Collins 2000; Brand et al. 1991; Bristow 1994).

Early Black Canadian feminist writings also documented the histories of Black women during the early nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

I importantly name edited collections, such as, Peggy Bristow's *We're Rooted Here and They Can't Pull Us Up: Essays in Canadian Women's History* (1994) and Dionne Brand's *No Burden to Carry: Narratives of Black Working Women in Ontario, 1920s-1950s* (1991). Both Bristow and Brand helped to fill the gaps obscured within mainstream Canadian history that repeatedly deny Black women's presences. This denial dramatizes how anti-Black racism has historically shaped Canadian intellectual traditions. The collections importantly highlight the role of oral history in preserving memory and concretizing a Black feminist history in Canada.

This mapping of the historical trajectory of Black Canadian women's presence continued in two edited texts: Njoke Wane, Katerina Deliovsky and Erica Lawson's *Back to the Drawing Board: African Canadian Feminism* (2002), and Notisha Massaquoi and Njoki Wane's *Theorizing Empowerment: Canadian Perspectives on Black Feminist Thought* (2007). Wane et al. (2002) offer an Ontario-based response to (white) feminism and patriarchy and emphasize that Black Canadian feminist thought is grounded in Black women's lived experiences, histories, and the intersections of race, class, gender, ability and sexuality. Massaquoi and Wane (2007) similarly define Black feminist theory as a transnational counter-culture informed by practice in ways that articulate Black women's experiences as constitutive of Canadian feminist knowledge. These Black Canadian feminist histories paved the way for the work of Karen Flynn's *Moving Beyond Borders: A History of Black Canadian and Caribbean Women in the Diaspora* (2011). In her later work, Flynn (2014) acknowledges the limitations within these groundbreaking anthologies in her critique of Black feminist writing that predominately reflects Anglophone Caribbean experiences from Ontario. She notes a generalized focus on only "some Black women as the quintessential research subjects," subsequently calling for more amplification of voices from the Dutch, Francophone, and Spanish-speaking Caribbean (184–89).

Despite Flynn's valid critique and Massaquoi and Wane's discussion of continental African women's contributions to Black Canadian feminist thought, I return in this dissertation to an exposition of Anglophone Caribbean experiences not to suggest that these experiences are the primary lens through which we should examine Black Canadian feminist thought, but because these experiences are what make my own work possible, as well as that of the second-generation artists I focus on. Where my work importantly differs from previous scholarship on the Anglophone Caribbean is its focus on second-generation perspectives.

Wider understandings of the lives of the Black women artists I investigate would also not be possible without the collective contributions of early Black women trailblazers. Makeda Silvera's groundbreaking publishing work at Sister Vision Press,[1] for example, paved the way for present-day platforms like, Hush Harbour, a Black feminist queer press announced in 2020 and co-founded by Whitney French and Alannah Johnson. These pioneers not only include the already mentioned academic theorists and their "quintessential research subjects" (Flynn 189), but also Black feminist organizers in Toronto, such as Akua Benjamin, Fran Endicott, Margaret Gittens, and Marlene Green. These women, as well as countless others, are all collectively indispensable to Black women's activism in Canada.

The Black Canadian feminist framing of my dissertation is also deeply informed by Katherine McKittrick's work in *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle* (2006). McKittrick draws from Black feminism to illuminate Black women's presence in Canada. She notes that space is socially produced in ways that have rendered Black bodies in place and space as ungeographic (xiii). Focusing on Black women's geographies, she re/centers the margins from which Black women are forced to operate.

[1] Sister Vision's first book publication, Speshal Rikwes (1985) by Ahdri Zhina Mandiela, was a book of poetry which helped solidify a literary tradition based on work by Black women and women of colour (Silvera 148).

Like Afua Cooper (2006), McKittrick unveils the significance of Marie Joseph Angélique, the enslaved woman tortured and executed for allegedly torching Old Montreal, in ways that undeniably implicate Canada in brutal practices of enslaving African peoples. These references pinpoint the relevance of "the afterlife of slavery" (Hartman 2007) in a Canadian context. McKittrick (2006) also importantly positions Canada as a necessary site for understanding Black diasporic subjectivity (x). These diasporic connections consider the enduring effects of not only Transatlantic slavery, but also colonialism in ways that completely unravel Canada's assumed benevolence that is often sustained by discourses of multiculturalism.

These Canadian approaches build on and expand African American insights that have also been critical in developing rich theories of "Blackness" and astute methodologies for studying Black women's lives in the wider African diaspora (Combahee River Collective 1986; Crenshaw 1991; Hill Collins 2000; hooks 2000; Nash 2019; Walker 1983). While this dissertation acknowledges the intersections between feminist scholarship in the United States and Canada in its reference to Walker's (1983) work, for example, it is not merely an extension of this body of work. This dissertation instead draws on the important "lifelines" African American feminists made possible, as well as the existing scholarship and activism in Canada to establish a uniquely second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women's discourse. I specifically turn to the work of Saidiya Hartman (2007) and Christina Sharpe (2016) to examine how these second-generation discourses are linked to broader African diasporic experiences. My argument is that Hartman (2007) and Sharpe (2016) both allow this research to demonstrate how diasporic links become central for expansive understandings of Black life and minimize the relevance of geographical borders by bringing to the forefront the ongoing and shared legacy of Transatlantic slavery and its afterlives.

The African-Canadian Diaspora: "The Weather" in "The Afterlife of Slavery"

Constructions of Blackness in the West are linked to the histories of the enslavement of African peoples throughout the Americas; however, as texts like Paul Gilroy's *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (1993) demonstrate, Canada often goes missing within discussions about Black and African diasporic realities. This dissertation, therefore, frames Black Canada as being grounded in an African diasporic context in response to oversights of this kind and centers Canadian contributions to the theorization of the African diaspora. This diasporic viewpoint follows Cedric Robinson's (2000) emphasis on "Africanness" as a priori to "Blackness" (xix) and as understood as an imagined process, condition, and/or discourse (Zeleza 2008).

This Afrodiasporic context is also an alternative to nation (Walcott 2016; Zeleza 2008), exercised by dispersed Black and African peoples worldwide, regardless of whether their migration was forced, voluntary or induced (Boyce Davies and M'Brow 14). While I choose to use the terms Black and African interchangeably, this choice is politically implicated in the differences between how Black and/or African experiences are articulated in the academy and should not be misread as a "romance of origins" (Hartman 2007, 98). The establishment of Afrodiasporic standpoints from Canada are imperative to theorizing the complex ways that Black and/or African experiences are lived in place. This dissertation positions Canada within this larger African diasporic framework as an integral location from which to theorize constructions of Blackness, highlight the specificities of African/Black Canadian realities, and link these specificities to experiences of global anti-Blackness. This Black and/or African diasporic experience draws from Saidiya Hartman's (2007) notion of the "afterlife of slavery" which notes the existing societal limitations marked through shared experiences.

She specifies such commonalities as, "skewed life chances, limited access to health and education, premature death, incarceration, and impoverishment" (Hartman, 6). Hartman insists that these present conditions are an ongoing reflection of the historically legitimized violent subjugation of African peoples within the institution of Transatlantic slavery over many centuries. Christina Sharpe (2016) further identifies the continuities of anti-Black violence through her concept of "the weather" which she defines as "…the totality of our environments; the weather is the total climate; and that climate is antiblack" (104). "The weather," Sharpe explains, demarcates how anti-Black racism functions as a pervasive global phenomenon.

Living in "the weather" (Sharpe 2016) in "the afterlife of slavery" (Hartman 2007) signals African diasporic peoples' inability to concretely delineate what counts as the past versus the present. Despite the contemporary nature of my dissertation, the second-generation contributions I delineate are necessarily connected to the past in ways that follow Michel-Rolph Trouillot's (1995) notion of pastness as a position. My engagement with a sense of "past-ness" is additionally exercised through the West African understanding of Sankofa as a metaphorical enactment of going back in order to move forward. Nonlinear understandings of temporality within this work also share Black Lives Matter Toronto's refusal of white supremacist notions of time: "In refusing white supremacist constructions of time and instead relying on Black feminist constructions of time to guide us, we reveal what new processes might look like and what the Afrofuture might hold" (Diverlus et al. 2020, 315). My dissertation bolsters Black Lives Matter Toronto's prioritization of Black feminist understandings of time to outline second-generation alternate processes and methods for living that reject anti-Black logics rendering them and their communities as disposable.

Like Sharpe (2016), I incorporate the arts within these life-sustaining conversations as a strategy for "understanding how slavery's continued unfolding is constitutive of the contemporary conditions of spatial, legal, psychic, and material dimensions of Black non/being" to counter the weather (20).

Methodology

This dissertation consists of both autoethnographic and traditional ethnographic approaches, and its sonic, visual and performance-based methods primarily borrow from the work of Kevin Quashie (2012), Christina Sharpe (2016), and Tina Campt (2017). The ethnographic approaches include fieldwork discussions in a series of semi-structured interviews with the six second-generation Caribbean artists whose work informs this dissertation. These interviews, for the most part, took place online via zoom during the summer of 2020 as COVID-19 restrictions limited in-person contact. My conversations with Kamilah Apong, Sandra Brewster, Anique Jordan, Brianna Roye, Camille Turner, and Shi Wisdom collectively signify second-generation Caribbean Canadian experiences and inform the Black women's arts praxis this research offers. The overall fieldwork discussions with these artists were communicated in English with a mix of Toronto slang which is largely informed by Jamaican patois (Elder 2016). These dual languages were demonstrated through the repetitive syntax in the artists' stories. Scholars have indicated that repetition is a tenet of African storytelling and is generally expressed in creole languages (Utley 2008; Sindoni 2010). This communicative style is also indicative of the Afro-Caribbean heritage that I and the six participating artists share.

In each of the chapters I use one of the four principles of Black women's arts praxis I developed out of these fieldwork conversations:

Art as survival practice, art as self-love, art as a radical care ethics, and art as embodied history—as a method to read the work of the six artists and to think about Black women's practices of art making in Canada.

My primary researcher position as an insider-outsider, as reflected in a variety of work by Black feminist and womanist theorists (Brand et al. 1991; Hill Collins 2000; hooks 1992; Massaquoi & Wane 2007; Philip 2017; Walker 1983), helped to maintain a level of transparency throughout our discussions. While typical ethnographic research maintains the anonymity of research subjects, my objective to illuminate the close relationship between second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women artists and the artwork they create, while celebrating their artistic interventions for understandings of Black Canada and the Caribbean, necessitate an identifiable research population. As reflected in Appendix A, all ethics protocols were followed to ensure I acquired explicit consent from all six participating artists to share their artwork, personal stories, and reveal their identities. With my commitment to remaining transparent throughout the research process, I also shared my findings with them prior to the final submission of my dissertation to ensure they were comfortable with my analysis and I am grateful for their trust.

Along with the artists' interviews, I engage the work of Black cultural theorists, Christina Sharpe (2016), Kevin Quashie (2012), and Tina Campt (2017) as method. I use their insights alongside the work, voices, and perspectives of the participating artists to help me engage critically with the selected artwork while unpacking strategies for Black liberation and freedom. Following Sharpe (2016), I draw on what I call a wake-work methodology to emphasize second-generation Canadian responses to systemic violence against Black people.

This wake-work method is used to demonstrate how Black women artists, in particular, offer us tools in remembrance of Black lives. Sharpe defines wake work as "a mode of inhabiting and rupturing this episteme with our known lived and un/imaginable lives. With that analytic we might imagine otherwise from what we know now in the wake of slavery" (18). The artwork by the second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian artists being studied provide new ideas about Black being in the world which simultaneously remember the dead while creating new ways to survive and thrive in both Canadian and Caribbean contexts. I employ this wake-work methodology primarily in chapter two.

In addition to a wake-work methodology, I follow Tina Campt's (2017) recognition of photography as a method to affirm the visibility and viability of Black life, and I use her methodology of "listening to images" throughout each dissertation chapter as an interdisciplinary method of reading texts. As Campt explains, "listening to images" enables us to look beyond "the unspoken relations" that determine what we see by paying more attention to various other possible ways of connecting to photos (7–9).

My exploration of other ways to understand Black life via the arts also benefits from Kevin Quashie's (2012) notion of the quiet. Quashie's "quiet" critiques a politics of representation where, "black subjectivity exists for its social and political meaningfulness rather than as a marker of the human individuality of the person who is black" (4). In response to this societal perpetuation of political meaningfulness, Quashie instead calls for discussions of Black life that pay closer attention to the interior than outward constructions of Blackness. Quashie's interventions offer useful methods for centering the everydayness of Black life that break free from limiting understandings of Black diasporic experiences habitually depicted in resistance contexts.

I understand the artists' voices and the interdisciplinary methodologies offered by Sharpe (2016), Campt (2017), and Quashie (2012) as taking part in what Katherine McKitrrick (2021) describes as a process of story-telling since mere "[d]escription is not liberation" (44). McKittrick tells us that the story as method is "tasked with immense and hopeful possibilities. The story is the practice of black life. With and for love. In this way, and as an interdisciplinary methodology, the story—theoretical, creative, groovy, skilled, action-based, secreted, shared—is a verb-activity that invites engagement, curiosity, collaboration" (9). The multi-modal and relational second-generation analysis I offer in this dissertation is thus made possible through a method of storytelling. The voices and artwork of the participating artists/storytellers detail how Black Caribbean Canadian women understand themselves and the wider world.

Introducing the Artists

> We believe that the most profound and potentially most radical politics come directly out of our own identity, as opposed to working to end somebody else's oppression. In the case of Black women this is a particularly repugnant, dangerous, threatening, and therefore revolutionary concept because it is obvious from looking at all the political movements that have preceded us that anyone is more worthy of liberation than ourselves. We reject pedestals, queenhood, and walking ten paces behind. To be recognized as human, levelly human, is enough. (Combahee River Collective 12)

The Combahee River Collective Statement (1977/1986) provides a critical Black feminist viewpoint that encourages articulations of Black women's lives from their own perspectives. Black Canadian feminists, like Notisha Massaquoi (2007), provide similar arguments, noting that, "[a]s Black women we need not spend time abstractly theorizing because our practice informs our theory" (5).

Thirty years apart, both the Combahee River Collective (1977) and Massaquoi (2007) confirm that Black women centering themselves is a legitimate lens through which scholarship on Black Canadian womanhood derives. This valuable approach for Black Canadian Studies scholarship is an important starting point from which to combat intersecting systems of oppression, such as racism, sexism, homo/bi/transphobia and ableism. Since my dissertation has largely been made possible by the six Black women artists I introduce below and following on the idea of storytelling as method, it is important that in introducing them I incorporate their own words to highlight their distinct perspectives. Their outlined voices below are specific responses to my invitation for their open-ended self-identifications when I shared with them the Combahee River Collective (1977) passage above. These introductions in the artists' own voices collectively specify how they embody a series of complex and fluid intersections that inform their various artistic contributions through music, photography, visual and performance art.

Kamilah Apong

Fig. 1. Kamilah Apong on stage.
Copyright © Darnell Reddick.

Kamilah Apong is a singer, songwriter, project manager and arts practitioner who is the lead singer of the Toronto-based disco-house band, *Tush*. She is also a former member of the now disbanded alternative R&B group, *Unbuttoned*. With a Jamaican and Trinidadian background, Apong was born and raised in Brampton, Ontario, where she currently resides. Apong describes herself as mad-identifying and further names other identity intersections such as, "[a] survivor of childhood and intergenerational trauma, queer, poly/bisexual, Black, mixed race."

In our interview, she explained these various intersections by stating, "I'm 'Chinese,' but I haven't really sat with that… I'm a creative as well, weirdo, nerd sometimes. I think that would more or less cover it" (Apong 2020).

Sandra Brewster

Fig. 2. Sandra Brewster's headshot. Copyright © Jalani Morgan.

Sandra Brewster is a Toronto-based multidisciplinary artist of Guyanese heritage who grew up in Pickering, Ontario. The complexities she captures within her work are reflected in her own lived-experiences and demonstrated in her interwoven, seemingly competing, self-identifications:

> "I'm Canadian, but I guess I'm African-Canadian. You know all these terminologies and such are interesting. I would identify as a Black person and I was born in Canada. But I'm Canadian! I was born here! I have every right. I have ownership here. But I mean, it's important to identify as a Canadian, because we've contributed. And it's not like we're just part of the landscape here, and to kind of deny the space means that you're going to give up what you have every right to have." (Brewster 2020)

Anique Jordan

Anique Jordan is a photographer, writer and curator who was raised in the Toronto, neighbourhood of Malvern and is of Trinidadian descent.

In our conversations, Jordan openly rejected the idea of understanding herself through prescribed limiting categories: I'm not a Black person without being a Black woman, or without being a Black artist, or Torontonian, etc. So being able to be recognized as those individual identities doesn't make me feel human. I think what makes me feel human, or for me to feel like I'm seen as human… I don't know, but I don't think it has anything to do with the identifiers for me. (Jordan 2020)

Fig. 3. Anique Jordan's headshot.

Brianna Roye

Jamaican-Canadian photographer, Brianna Roye, hails from the West end of Toronto and admittedly produces photographs in warmer tones since she wants to be "seen and felt as warm" (Roye 2020). Her intentional colour choices are a result of being told that she is "kind of prickly and standoffish," although as she explains, "…obviously when you get to know me, I'm not that" (Roye 2020).[2] Roye further described herself as, "a Jamaican woman, masculine presenting, queer, artist, photographer. One thing I'm not really super open about… I'm on the asexual spectrum, but not asexual. I'm like right in the middle: Greysexual" (Roye 2020).

[2] Roye's experiences are linked to Rowena Linton and Lorna McLean's (2017) discussion of how second-generation Jamaican-Canadian women and girls actively challenge stereotypes that predict them as being "sassy, loud, funny, neck-popping, finger-snapping, gum-popping, assertive, argumentative, and angry" (82).

Fig. 4. Brianna Roye's headshot. Copyright © Josef Adamu.

Camille Turner

Camille Turner is a multidisciplinary performance artist of Jamaican descent who was raised in Hamilton, Ontario, and currently lives in Toronto.[3] Turner grew up as a "total sci-fi head" and describes her Afrofuturist identity as a really important one: "I feel like it gives me a superpower. That superpower is just being able to create worlds... to be able to think in an unbounded way, to centralize Blackness, to understand time as non-linear, to really recognize my own imagination as a tool for liberation, those things are really important to me. That's really helped me to feel my entirety of my being" (Turner 2020).

Fig. 5. Camille Turner's headshot. Copyright © Ebti Nabag.

[3] Camille Turner was actually born in Jamaica. Thus, immigration scholars like Ruben G. Rumbaut (2004) would instead position her as being "1.5 generation" (Rumbaut 1166) due to her mid-childhood age of arrival. This dissertation follows Karen Flynn and Evelyn Marrast's (2008) example of how such rigid distinctions are rarely maintained, as those who were foreign-born but mostly raised in Canada are still categorized as second-generation Canadians (4).

Shi Wisdom

Singer, songwriter, vocal coach, and mother, Shi Wisdom, grew up in the West end of Toronto, Ontario. Wisdom is from Eglinton West, which is notoriously known as "Little Jamaica." She describes herself as a "cosplay person," who dresses up not as the usual anime or cartoons, but rather as the various Black women she has witnessed over the course of her life. Her self-identifications are still a work in progress as she states that, "I'm just working through it, but at this point I would say more African than Jamaican, because I don't even know what being Jamaican means at this point. But culturally, definitely Jamaican over Canadian, over anything" (Wisdom 2020).

Instagram photo of Shi Wisdom.
Copyright © Shi Wisdom.

These varied categories, that all but one of the artists (Anique Jordan) discussed in this work as necessary for them to be recognized as human, highlight the diverse relationships between their self-definitions and imposed meanings of Black womanhood. Their self-reflexive complexities offer worthwhile insights for this dissertation since Audre Lorde (1984) describes Black women's self-definitions as a "vital component in the war for Black liberation" (Lorde 45–46).

Lorde also warns of the dangers in foreclosing aspects of Black women's self-identifications and describes that process of self-censorship as "destructive and fragmenting":

> As a Black lesbian feminist comfortable with the many different ingredients of my identity, and a woman committed to racial and sexual freedom from oppression, I find I am constantly being encouraged to pluck out some one aspect of myself and present this as the meaningful whole, eclipsing or denying the other parts of self. But this is a destructive and fragmenting way to live. My fullest concentration of energy is available to me only when I integrate all the parts of who I am, openly, allowing power from particular sources of my living to flow black and forth freely through all my different selves, without the restrictions of externally imposed definition. Only then can I bring myself and my energies as a whole to the service of those struggles which I embrace as part of my living. (Lorde 1984, 120–21)

This work follows Lorde's lead by acknowledging all the complexities of the participating artists' identities, including their differences. Art Routes recognizes this complexity of thought and these intersections as integral to the re/imagining of the African diaspora and the project of Black Canadian Studies.

My closeness to this research also requires a careful analysis of my own intersections and histories. Given Canada's racial capitalist underpinnings, contextualizing my being alongside differentiated understandings of gendered and racialized labour offers a useful starting point. Constructions of Blackness certainly inform my wider understandings of self since the institution of Transatlantic slavery in the Americas established a set of norms and codes that predetermined outcomes and opportunities for Black peoples which continue into the present.

Consequently, understandings of my Black "Jamaicanness" are linked to the awareness that I am a descendant of enslaved Africans. Additionally, my maternal grandmother informs my sense of "Canadianness" since she was a Black woman who worked various factory jobs and performed other informal domestic duties while undocumented in Canada. Her efforts paved the way for the arrival of my mother and her siblings to Canada in the early 1970s. Therefore, my understandings of Blackness, womanhood, and my Jamaican and Canadian identities are all unevenly connected by these varied and overlapping histories.

These uneven historical connections that inform my intersections have often led to stark contradictions. By this I mean those moments where Canadian society and the world more broadly, as a result of increasing globalizing processes, enumerate my worth as a Black woman in ways that are antithetical to my own construction of self. While my experience is unique to me, there are many aspects of my life that are relatable to countless other Black (Canadian) women. I read the selected artwork identified below with interest in how these artistic creations and intersections of the artists both reflect this relatable experience and strengthen this dissertation's original take on second-generation Black Canadian women's creative forms of self-making, reflection and self-reclamation.

Selected Artwork

The works of the contributing artists were selected not only for the interesting personal and professional ways I have come to know their work, but also because they collectively speak to the contemporary realities of Black Caribbean Canadian women from second-generation perspectives. Kamilah Apong's song and music video "To Darnelladon (And Beyond)" (2018) outlines the implications of maintaining a commitment to operating within genres of disco and house which originate from Black queer culture.

The musical contributions of this dissertation are also highlighted through Shi Wisdom's song and music video, "Young Gunner," (2014), which tackle the complex relationship between performances of Black masculinity and the realities of gun violence in Black communities in Toronto (Valino 2015). Additionally, my "soulified" version of Bob Marley's "Waiting in Vain" adds to these musical conversations through what I call a specifically second-generation remix that reflects the ongoing tradition of the "Jamaicanization" of cover songs (Ashbourne 2012).

Anique Jordan's photography exhibit *Ban' Yuh Belly* (2019) consists of a series of black and white self-portraits that portray the realities of loss due to community and police violence. These photos brilliantly capture the grief, anger, mental health challenges, and self-care that often follow the routine iterations of anti-Black violence experienced in Toronto. Brianna Roye's *Out of Many, One People* (2018) is an ongoing photography project that offers queer-centered possibilities of survival, resiliency and love. Her work challenges representations of 2SLGBTQ+ communities to critique normative understandings of queer space in both Caribbean and Canadian contexts. Sandra Brewster's Blur (2019) series, which consists of gel transferred photos of various Black peoples, and "Heirloom," a glass jar filled with fruits and wine and other ingredients used to make black cake, help me to explore the multifaceted nature of Black Caribbean Canadian identities. Finally, Camille Turner's persona "Miss Canadiana" (2002) confronts the myth of "Blackness" as foreign to "Canadianness" while critiquing normative constructions of Canadian citizenship. I use Turner's character, "Miss Canadiana," to think about what exactly happens when a Black woman positions herself as the representation of Canadian heritage.

Chapter Breakdown

In the first chapter, *Art as Survival Practice: Developing A Black Women's Arts Praxis*, I introduce the four principles of Black women's arts praxis I developed out of my fieldwork conversations: (1) Art as Survival Practice; (2) Art as Self-Love; (3) Art as a Radical Care Ethics; and (4) Art as Embodied History. In this chapter, I link the first principle, art as survival practice to Alice Walker's (1983) foundational concept of the term, womanist, and her discussion of the arts as a mode of Black women's survival. I then go on to unpack each of the four principles, centering the voices of the artists I am working with. I read the lived experiences of the second-generation participating artists in relation to these principles to exemplify how they operate in the everyday and illuminate the close relationship between women's artwork and daily lives. This Black women's arts praxis thus identifies the important contributions toward second-generation discourses that are led by Black Caribbean Canadian women artists.

In chapter two, I draw on Christina Sharpe's (2016) work to deploy a wake-work methodology to think about how one might live in relationship to loss without privileging death over life using the music and photography of Shi Wisdom and Anique Jordan. Through an analysis of Wisdom's "Young Gunner" (2014) and Jordan's *Ban Yuh Belly* (2019), *Art as a Radical Care Ethic: Uncovering Gendered Responses to Black Canadian Community Violence* contends with Black community responses to systemic anti-Black violence by demonstrating how second-generation Black Canadian women artists maintain critical relationships between art-making and community engagement. I use the principle of art as a radical care ethic to pay close attention to individuals who are most silenced and rendered disposable.

Reading Wisdom's and Jordan's artwork in relation to this principle uncovers how their music and photography provide community-centered approaches that critique Canadian public memory by exercising strategies to ensure that all Black lives are grieved, remembered and memorialized.

Chapter three explores photographs from Brianna Roye's *Out of Many, One People* series and Kamilah Apong's song via Tush, "To Darnelladon (and Beyond)." This chapter, *Art as Self-Love: "Loud" Representations of Second-Generation Black Caribbean Canadian Queer Life* through Music and Photography, employs the principle of art as self-love to explore how Apong's and Roye's photography and music shift heteronormative understandings of Black Caribbean Canadian experiences. This chapter uses second-generation perspectives, alongside Alison Donnell's (2022) notion of creolized sexualities and Emilio Amideo's (2021) theorization of sexual fluidity, to offer new readings of Black sexualities that center queer and trans identities, recognizing Roye's and Apong's artistic contributions as part of a counter-archive documenting the long-standing presence of Black 2SLGBTQ+ communities in Canada and the Caribbean. Roye and Apong's collective emphasis on Black queer and trans realities thus position chapter three as a Black women artists' reassessment of Canadian and Caribbean landscapes that frames these geographies as always already Black and queer.

Chapter four, *Art as Embodied History: On Second-Generation Be(Long)Ing*, challenges Canada's multicultural narrative through new interdisciplinary and diasporic standpoints by problematizing normative understandings of "Canadianness" as a response to the question, "Where are you (really) from?" By exploring the visual and performance art of Sandra Brewster and Camille Turner, as well as my own music, chapter four employs the principle of art as embodied history to establish a nuanced second-generation position of be(long)ing and reveal strategies for how Black Caribbean Canadian women artists construct understandings of "home."

Brewster's engagement of visual cultures in Blur and "Heirloom," Turner's persona of "Miss Canadiana," and my Bob Marley "soulified" cover of "Waiting in Vain" collectively demonstrate second-generation practices of self-reclamation. These self-led positions show how the arts facilitate our ability to (re)imagine and construct more inhabitable environments for ourselves and surrounding communities using second-generation strategies for living in a settler-colonial state like Canada while developing new relationships to the Caribbean.

Conclusion

I argue ultimately in this work that the expressive arts are a critical vehicle for articulating (radical) meanings of Black Canadian life. Arguably, arriving at this destination requires some grappling with the power structures that organize our society. Nevertheless, the moments of joy, love, community, safety and protection, healing, spirituality, home and belonging that come out of this work also demand a different stance to grasp the fullness of second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women's being. Art Routes, therefore, illuminates the complex ways that second-generation Black women artists carve out safe spaces for themselves and their communities. Although these processes and conversations are quite messy and even painfully uncomfortable at times, this Black Caribbean Canadian artistic dialogue goes beyond discussions of oppression, trauma and resistance.

This approach derives in particular from a fieldwork conversation with Sandra Brewster that allowed me to think through Black art in ways that push toward the ultimate goal of articulating and understanding Black Canadian life as is. Brewster made this important intervention to locate her work ethic and understanding of self in relation to the Combahee River Collective's (1986) statement on being "levelly human":

> What I'm trying to put forward is a radical approach to our ways of making art where it is not always about, and I understand the importance of this too, but it's not always about [being] in response to this thing that we feel attempts to stop our progress. It's like we are fine the way we are, so what is it that's within us? There are so many stories that we can tell and so many ways we represent and identify, we can express that. (2020)

In this way, Brewster calls for the uncovering of hidden stories to broaden interpretations of Black Canadian experiences. In the next chapter, I begin this widening process by positing a Black women's arts praxis as a method for living relationally.

CHAPTER ONE – ART AS SURVIVAL PRACTICE: DEVELOPING A BLACK WOMEN'S ARTS PRAXIS

I begin this chapter with a brief return to Alice Walker's (1983) early concept of womanism to locate the arts and artists I think with in this dissertation within a gendered analysis of Black Canada. Specifically, I find Walker's illumination of the everyday creativity of Black women—often emanating from the most mundane tasks and critical to their survival—as deeply generative for the work I am doing in this project. Black women artists, regardless of whether or not they are self-proclaimed as such, are numerous and diverse, including writers, dancers, poets, "freedom runners" (Hamilton 2014; Maynard 2017), quilters, painters, crocheters, singers, gardeners or cooks. I, therefore, use Alice Walker's womanist interventions as an entry point into my second-generation Caribbean Canadian artistic analysis, understanding that Black women, young and old, all across the Americas often need to creatively re/construct their lives in order to live in worlds that are antithetical to their survival.

I am interested, in particular, in the ways that Walker links the arts and artists to a womanist activism. As she states, "[T]he work of the black artist is also to create and to preserve what was created before [her].... The artist then is the voice of the people, but she is also The People" (135, 138). Womanism, as Walker suggests here, allows me to investigate the close relationship between the lived-experiences of Black women artists and the artwork they create. It is important to point out, however, that the participating artists in my research do not themselves identify as womanist and that self-identification is not required for this research. Rather than trying to make a claim for womanism as a political imperative, my aim is to examine how womanism, specifically Walker's link between womanism and art, might provide a lens for understanding the second-generation artistic practices of Black Canadian women.

I discuss how these artists are each positioned differently in relation to the four dynamic womanist principles I discuss further in this chapter.

While I draw on some aspects of Walker's arts-based definition of womanism, I also note its limitation in the assumptions it makes, for example, about biological notions of gendered difference. My work disrupts these gendered constructs while offering creative ways to think about Black being in Canada and elsewhere. I argue that second-generation Caribbean women in Canada offer at least three key interventions in womanism as concept and praxis. First, by challenging constructions of gender beyond a male/female binary, they signal fluid, creative, and nuanced understandings of Black womanhood and girlhood in ways that critique fixed identities and socially sanctioned gendered behaviour. Second-generation Caribbean Canadian experiences and artwork also register the unruliness of Black women's presence in Canada as a function in excess of the nation state.

In my insistence that we recognize how racialized identities are normatively read as existing outside the nation state, I use second-generation experiences to mark their exclusion as an opening into another kind of possibility beyond the dictates of the white supremacist, settler colonial nation. Finally, I delineate four principles of Black women's art praxis that are grounded in second-generation Black Caribbean women's art practices in Toronto: art as survival practice, art as self-love, art as a radical care ethics, and art as embodied history. These four principles build on and expand the links Walker makes between Black women artists' lives and their artwork, providing an important foundation for the arts-based approach of my research. Together these principles outline the broader stakes for Black women's artistic creations, allowing Black women artists to engage in a love politic which prioritizes the self, practice sustainable community care, and honour the dead while creating new pathways to thrive.

This chapter is framed around my first principle of art as survival practice to underscore the fact that making art is also a practice of self-making for many Black women, and that Black women artists and their artwork are necessary for wider Black community survival.

The Four Principles of Black Women's Arts Praxis

In this chapter, I specifically draw on my interviews with the artists to ground these principles in their lived experience and artistic practice. In this way, my dissertation exercises and maintains a level of accountability in the process of knowledge production by ensuring the centrality of the voices and ideas of Black Canadian women and their communities. In defining a Black women's art praxis, therefore, I engage the work of second-generation Caribbean women artists to underscore Black woman's art as a method for living.

I. Art as Survival Practice

My dissertation is fundamentally preoccupied with the wider question, why create? My approach to this inquiry from a second-generation perspective borrows from Walker's (1983) theory of womanism and her link between artistry and Black womanhood. Walker argues, for example, that "[i]t is the end, the saving of lives that we writers are about. Whether we are 'minority' writers or 'majority.' It is simply in our power to do this. We do it because we care…We care because we know this: the life we save is our own" (14). This quote expands understandings of what it means to save Black lives by its attention to the capacious, creative and artistic ways that Black people ensure the survival of themselves and their communities. Through the context of authorship, Walker positions the arts as a life-saving method and essentially renders Black women's ability to create within matters of life and death. The creativity exercised by Black women, then, functions as a lifeline since these artists create literally to survive.

Anique Jordan's decision to create began during her early years and exemplifies this principle of art as survival practice. In sharing that she has always been creative, Jordan demonstrates how an arts praxis can be exercised even during one's childhood:

> I think I've always been creative and had creative impulses at my core. From when I was young, that's something that has sort of always been driving me, wanting this desire to be different, to think differently, to create new things. So that was always there, though I didn't know what that meant. I just knew that I just had this sort of resistance towards conforming to a certain degree… my brother was very artistic. [He] would always be drawing things and making board games, and reading comic books, and my mom, when she was young, she was a dancer. She likes to not say that but, really, she was. From when I was young, she put me in dance... we'd have full six or eight-hour classes every week. And that was Afro-Caribbean dance… we had to learn various drum rhythms. We had to learn to respect elders... We had to learn traditional creole mythology… all these sorts of things. (Jordan 2020)

Jordan's references to immediate family members who were also creative contribute to her own personal understandings of herself as a member of an artistic community. I particularly find it interesting that her childhood Afro-Caribbean dance lessons went beyond training in dance mechanics to exemplify several of the principles of Black women's arts praxis this chapter explores, including art as radical care ethics and embodied history. While centering Afro-Caribbean arts through music and dance, the program Jordan recalls also fostered a sense of pride in Black cultural identities by teaching and celebrating traditions such as creole mythology and offering new ways to inform participants' sense of self. Those understandings of self were further dependent on a commitment to wider community values and histories.

For other contributing artists, the recognition of their role as artists came later. Unlike Jordan, Brianna Roye admits that recognizing herself as an artist was not an automatic realization and that she had to grow into that self-revelation. Roye notes, in fact, that self-identifying as an artist was a fairly recent occurrence for her, only made possible through a series of life transitions:

> I am only kind of recently coming to terms with being an artist. It was never something I was ever interested in growing up as a kid. That was never my path. Growing up, I didn't really have one to be honest with you. It was just basketball or nothing. So obviously you get to a point where it's like, 'Okay, what do I do other than basketball?'… I went to school for journalism. That didn't pan out. But while in school… I started using a camera a little bit. Because you know, they teach you all the different streams and get you familiar with things… the defining moment [was when] I dropped out of university and I was like, 'What do I do?' Basically, I got my own camera. When I dropped out, I didn't really have a plan so I just kind of worked and kind of started taking my photography serious[ly] and eventually I was like, let me get something. Because obviously [with] first-generation [parents], I have to have a paper, something to say, 'Hey I did it!' So, I was like, let me just go to school, Humber College for photography, so I can kill two birds with one stone: Give my mom the diploma and also just get more hands-on learning with photography.[4] (Roye 2020)

In Roye's adolescent experiences, she did not see art as a viable option, while other avenues related to sport, which are dependent on the racialization of Black youth, were more readily available.

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[4] Roye's reference to being first generation in this passage identifies how generational categories are not universal as this term can also used to describe the first generation of children born to immigrant parents (Griffiths and Tong 2007; Moffett 2020).

The work of scholars, like Carl E. James (2012; 2003), on constructions of Black masculinity in relation to sport makes clear that Roye's experience is certainly common, particularly for Black youth growing up in Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area. James (2012) explains that school administrations in conjunction with a stereotypical curriculum foster reduced expectations for Black male students, in particular. He shares that in addition to the failed understanding of Black male students' classroom performance, Black male youth are at the same time, sought after by recruiters on basketball courts "primarily on the basis of race and physicality" (477). James (2003) also confirms that these views are symptoms of Canadian multiculturalism and are solidified through a process of racialization where athletic ability becomes a signifier of Blackness and masculinity (140). Furthermore, Davis (2018) explains that the stereotypical link between Black masculinity and athleticism "potentially robs Black youth of fulfilling their widest potential" (471). The projection of these stereotypical values onto Black boys and the educational system's overwhelming subscription to the idea of sports as a "male-only arena," ironically make Black girl athletes feel that participating in sports is a "privilege" for them (Ogunrinde 2022, 10,13). According to Joyce O. Ogunrinde (2022), these patriarchal underpinnings position sports as a "contested space for Black girls" where they can resist hegemonic gendered constraints (3).

While James (2012) and Davis (2018) both focus on the experiences of Black Canadian boys, it is important to keep in mind that Roye self-identifies as masculine-presenting. As she explains, "I looked like a little boy as a kid. I was just straight up tomboy-ing it out" (Roye 2020), which suggests that she was not exempt from the historical stereotypes of Black women and girls that oscillate between constructions of hyper-sexuality and "mannishness."

These stereotypes place Black girls, as Anique Jordan suggests later in this chapter, within the category of the transgender. In making this observation, I am not attempting to conflate the experiences of cisgender Black men and boys with those of masculine presenting Black women, girls, or transgender people, but rather I am seeking to identify how educational systems are complicit in perpetuating limited constructions of "Blackness" and masculinity through sport. Roye demonstrates how some Black girls use sports as "opportunities for catharsis and emotional expression" by defining her own relationship to athleticism that allows for more fluid gendered representations (Ogunrinde 2022, 12).

Roye also makes several notable arguments linked specifically to second-generation realities, detailing the pressures faced by second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women who are the first in their families to attend postsecondary institutions. Statistics Canada (2020) confirms that Black women (and men) aged 25-59 are half as likely to hold a bachelors degree or higher in comparison to the rest of the Canadian population (Statistics Canada, 2020). Roye, in recognizing that earning her diploma was, in fact, meant to pacify her first-generation mother, demonstrates her awareness of the unique opportunities second-generation Caribbean Canadian women are afforded, along with the expectations these opportunities carry. Kamilah Apong shares similar sentiments, explaining that she went to university to "get a degree in something practical" because her parents said she had to (Apong 2020). Similar to Roye and Apong, I share this second-generation burden to make my hard-working Caribbean immigrant parents proud. My scholarly achievements, thus far, have been understood as not being necessarily my own, but also theirs.

Second-generation burdens, indeed, constitute a common trope within Caribbean immigrant family narratives about sacrifice, especially in stories of previous generations leaving the Caribbean (often referred to as "back home") in search of "a better life." This first-generation search is not only for themselves but especially for their children, and in some instances, to better support the family members they left behind. Sandra Brewster explains that, "[i]n my parent's situation, they had to move from Guyana to here because back home was just not livable for them. They were trying to make a future that would be better for themselves as well as people who they had not even given birth to yet" (Brewster 2020). Here, Brewster echoes stories of the Caribbean immigrant's quest for better horizons (Davis 2022).

The necessity to obtain academic standing or what Roye calls "a paper" for first-generation mothers, grandmothers, aunties and fathers can then be read as a gesture of thanks, possibly to address second-generation inner-feelings of indebtedness for the journeys and sacrifices made. What is simply referred to as "a paper," is then much more than that, as it becomes tangible proof demonstrating that first-generation parents' diasporic journeys and subsequent efforts to make Canada "home" are perhaps worth it. The tension between the need to establish credentials and economic independence, and art as a survival practice reveal a fraught relationship between family and community that second-generation artists are forced to navigate. This fraught relationship reveals the extent to which both first- and second-generation relationships to labour are defined by the anti-Black logics of racial capitalism, which simultaneously delegitimize Black cultural production and render the arts as an irresponsible and unsustainable field of profession.

I am interested, then, in how my principle of art as survival practice might dismantle distinctions that hierarchize work in racialized ways that sustain the societal imperative to produce only for capitalist gain. While it can be argued that this first-generation projected and/or second-generation assumed burden reproduces western neoliberal capitalist constructs that render the arts as a "hobby" rather than a "real" profession, my principle of art as survival practice aims to (re)position the arts as a vehicle to imagine and dream of other worlds where human worth or value is not defined by one's ability to accumulate wealth. These alternative viewpoints do not perpetuate the colloquial trajectory toward "making it" within racial capitalist systems of oppression but instead use the principle of art as survival practice to emphasize the imperative to cultivate community health and well-being. These wider stakes of Black artistic practices underscore the fact that the ability to create as a Black artist is connected to real issues of life and death and echo Alice Walker's (1983) womanist insights into the life-saving capacities of Black women's art. These survival concerns operate outside of racial capitalist constructions and reject racist logics that equate Black being to the labour it produces. Art as survival practice, therefore, maintains a flexible understanding of what constitutes the arts and an artist to further acknowledge the presence of the creative imagination in nuanced and anti-capitalist ways.

Shi Wisdom, for example, is keen about problematizing how success is measured in North American societies since she has always been comfortable with being an unsigned artist:

> I never signed to a major label, but I never really wanted to. I think a lot of people felt disappointment that that did not happen for me, but I don't think that they realize that it's not necessarily something that I wanted… I never really wanted to be without my freedom. I never wanted to feel like I can't say something.

> I don't want these people to have no muzzle over my mouth where I can't even say the most basic thing because, 'oh, we're being sponsored by so and so,' or 'oh, these are the people that's paying your bills.' Like well, fuck them because that's how I feel. And if they're going on with something that I don't agree with, I'm going to say it. If they're involved with something that I don't agree with or if they fall in the line of something that I'm not down for then so be it. And I don't mind losing that opportunity because I don't necessarily care to be connected to something that I don't feel connected to. Not all bridges have to stand. Some can be burned down. (Wisdom 2020)

Here, Wisdom rejects the notion of a musician's success as only legible through the context of a record deal. Reassessing the value of Black Caribbean Canadian women's art using the principle of art as survival practice provides an important opportunity that refuses anti-capitalist frameworks and instead reads Black women's artistic creations as essential to their own survival as creators, as well as the survival of their wider communities. The implementation of more sustainable platforms for Black Canadian women artists, such as those found on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram, or within community led initiatives, such as RisEnt, The Dark Room Sessions, and Hummingbird open mic, has been critical to this practice of refusal.

Kamilah Apong also outlines similar problematic positions in the music industry in her reference to the "ball and chain" that comes along with capitalist success (2020). As she states, "…it really comes down to enforcing boundaries. I think those are some of the most important moments I've had as a Black queer femme artist—boundary enforcing, and learning that people really don't like when you do that. It will upset them… You're getting all the tea today Shauna!" (Apong 2020). Apong and Wisdom, thus, shed light on the need to create the kinds of settings where Black women can speak and/or sing freely without feeling as if they will be muzzled.

These future generative artistic spaces for Black Canadian women artists would importantly disallow anger or aggression as immediate responses to Black women's ideas and voices.

Returning to Roye's childhood story, highlighting the tensions between the artistic desires of second-generation Black Canadian youth and the need to acquire the traditional "paper" their first-generation parents expect, the principle of art as survival practice also considers why the arts is not seen as a viable career option for Canadian immigrant children. Camille Turner provide some answers to this question during our interviews:

> I sincerely believe that we all start off as artists and we get socialized out of it. We get told somehow that we can't do this, that's not a proper thing to be. It's not a proper job. And growing up with immigrant parents, I was told that my whole life. It's a great hobby. My parents are creative and I come from a creative family, but this is not a proper job. This is not a thing that you can actually own and be. Life is precarious. It's just not a proper profession… for the most part, every day I have to wake up and tell myself I can do this. It's a lot of constant overcoming and constant becoming. It's not something that just kind of happened in any kind of natural way. There was nothing predefined for me to step into. I had to create this and keep creating it every day. (Turner 2020)

Turner's conception of art as both intrinsic to Black experience and in opposition to the capitalist assumptions of North American societies engages with the principles of Black women's art praxis in several ways. Her ongoing conscious decision to create that she regularly grapples with demonstrates how the centering of self and practice of self-love works in conjunction with art as a method for survival. By waking up with the affirmation that she can indeed create, she rejects what the wider Canadian society and her family deem as a "proper profession."

My reading of Turner's positive affirmation, using the principle of art as survival practice, allows me to contest artificial distinctions between the arts and other legitimized forms of employment.

Turner's reference to her artwork as a process of "constant overcoming and constant becoming," further indicates that Black Canadian women's relationship to the arts is dependent on a process of ongoing investment and struggle, as well as personal growth and transformation. The successful engagement of this artistic relationship is a difficult process, as Turner mentions, because Black Canadian women and girls are socialized out of the very creativity that might sustain them. These socializing processes are a result of wider pressures that determine what is regarded as "successful" in a capitalist, patriarchal and anti-Black racist Canadian society. These very subjective and competitive ideas of success are also tied to the demands Roye identifies, such as, earning "a paper" because these steps are believed to be necessary for second-generation Black Canadian women to achieve sustainable livelihoods. What Turner's parents referred to as "a proper profession," did not include the arts since expressing creativity is largely deemed a hobby rather than a legitimate career. Art in this sense is seen as rooted in the imagination—dreaming and feeling—rather than in the hard work of living in a racist capitalist society. I draw from the principle of art as survival practice to show how for the participating artists, acts of imagining and living are deeply interwoven demonstrating the extent to which the arts constitute an important part of their survival.

Black women's understanding of art as a survival practice also demands that we consider the extent to which Turner's simultaneous affirmation of her creative potential and rejection of her parents' insistence on the pursuit of a "proper profession" signals a convergence of the ungeographic and a refusal to know one's societal place.

Katherine McKittrick (2021) outlines how slavery, colonialism and their legacies reveal the ungeographic through a projection of notions of the human that are dependent on settler geographies legible only through the contexts of “production, accumulation, and profit generation” (159). Turner's affirmation and everyday artistic process of becoming demonstrates how she challenges white supremacist mechanisms that constantly render Black geographies illegible through her refusal to stay in her labour-rooted hegemonically designated societal position. This societal position is also illuminated in traditional Caribbean commands, such as, “humble yourself,” or “you better know your place” which function to either remind children of their inferiority, or “…to chastise someone who had been perceived to have stepped out of his or her social position” (Philip 1990, 296). I thus read Turner’s artistic affirmation in ways that mirror Philip’s (1990) artistic refusal as a Black female poet to “know her place” in Canada or the Caribbean.

Turner’s early artistic creation, “Suit of Armour” (2005), similarly responds to the competing authoritative voices that surrounded her during her adolescence and demonstrates that second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women are not exempt from societal projections attempting to put them in their place. Turner’s DVD, “Suit of Armour,” depicts the various pressures faced by young Black Canadian women and girls ranging from normalized media images of white women to household narratives like, “I wish my daughters would settle down, and get married and have kids” (Turner 2020). In this way, Turner’s artistic career reflects the principle of art as survival practice by making visible the heteronormative middleclass expectations placed on Black women—expectations she continuously challenges.

Turner also suggests that there was no predefined mold for her to use to step into her role of an artist. Her experience connects to Alice Walker's (1983) discussion of a lack of role models that Black women can draw on to activate the potential futures that are possible. Referring to Toni Morrison, Walker reveals that Morrison had to write the kinds of stories she needed simply because they did not exist: "[s]he must be her own model as well as the artist attending, creating, learning from, realizing the model, which is to say, herself" (8). The genius of our now ancestor Toni Morrison transformed our literary world by taking the chance at being her own literary model. Morrison's personal story is a profound one because it demonstrates that even in the face of barriers that deny Black Canadian women access to the models they need, making the choice to create regardless, allows them to become their own interlocutors.

I, therefore, read the artwork of the participating artists as a reflection of their collective refusal to subscribe to the positions that the wider society projects onto second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women. Such strategies of refusal partially stem from childhood experiences and are evident, for example, in Anique Jordan's discussion of her experiences as a girl and the messiness of this category:

> I never really related to the idea of girliness or girl. I think there's something very trans about Black girlhood because we are expected to be very masculine…"You can't cry. Suck it up! Figure it out! Do the things! Get it right!" There's no space for ideas of femininity that could allow for softness or that it's okay to be vulnerable. Some of the tropes behind femininity don't get ascribed. And for me, it didn't get offered to me as a Black girl. (Jordan 2020)

Jordan's experiences indicate how normative gender constructions largely negate the existence of Black girlhood.

The “adultification” of Black girls that erases their childhood, indeed, makes Black girlhood largely unrecognizable in an anti-Black racist (Canadian) society (Ferguson 2000; Toliver 2018). Jordan’s sentiments, therefore, reflect the ways in which the adultification of Black girls takes away their ability to make mistakes since their choices are always read as intentional, eliminating “the idea that they are learning and growing” and rendering them as undeserving of love and care (Toliver 2018, 11). My own earlier work explicates the wider conditions that make present-day adultification possible through a discussion of the blurred distinctions between Black girlhood and womanhood rooted in chattel slavery. I outline how slavery “…made it possible for enslaved girls to occupy the same position as enslaved women” since they were both forced to labour alongside each other in the fields (Brown 2019, 214). The resulting obscured boundaries between Black girlhood and womanhood must, therefore, be read as a condition of “the afterlife of slavery” (Hartman 2007). Slavery’s afterlife is deeply reflected in Jordan’s expression of a lack of a sense of protection for Black girls, reinforcing Toliver’s (2018) claim about the unavailability of love and care for Black girls because of their social adultification.

Jordan further extends Toliver’s (2018) analysis by linking her inability to claim the category of girlhood and receive expressions of tenderness and care to her dark skin and short natural hair both of which disrupt normative gendered standards of beauty (2020). Her thoughts of not being seen as worthy of protection echo my discussions of how white supremacy sustains beauty standards, valorizing whiteness and constructing dark skin and tightly coiled natural hair as undesirable (Brown 2018; 2019). Patricia Hill Collins (2004) confirms that white womanhood defines what constitutes beauty, desirability, and value while determining who is worthy of protection, thus, organizing Black femininity through “images of bitches, bad mothers, mammies” (64).

These stereotypical constructions render Black women and girls as least desirable and unworthy of protection (199). The everyday implications of such gendered and racialized constructions are shown in Jordan's repetitive self-description of having "short, natural Black girl hair with clips and plaits," signaling the underlying negative connotations associated with natural Black hair, accompanied with her sense of being masculinized. Jordan's childhood experiences, thus, reveal the existing societal codes that devalue Black life in Canada and the ways in which white supremacist and patriarchal standards translate into a wider disregard for the need to protect, love and care for Black Canadian women and girls.

Jordan's perceived separation from Black girlhood extends further into her adult life where she also highlights a sense of removal from definitions of Black womanhood:

> Still now, there's very few times where I say, where I will identify as a Black woman. My identity connected to the word woman is so… there's like, a type of removal. Maybe, I haven't yet found the space where I feel I belong, or I can understand myself through the idea, the word, or the identity woman. I've never found that. It's something that I don't know, I think it's a bit removed for me, I guess. But I don't know how to fully talk about it other than thinking about it in a trans type of way. (Jordan 2020)

Jordan's views reflect the Canadian societal perpetuation of racialized gender constructions where the category of woman is always already grounded in whiteness (Bristow 1994; Dua and Robertson 1999; Massaquoi and Wane 2007; Wane et al. 2002). Jordan's expressed separation from Black girlhood and womanhood also demonstrates where my research must depart from Alice Walker's (1983) early framings of womanist thought since it limits possibilities for understanding gender beyond a male/female binary, as well as understandings of transness.

By positioning the categories of “girl” and “woman” as contested spaces emerging from the particular raced, gendered and sexualized histories of Black Caribbean peoples in Canada, Jordan’s complicated relationships to the categories of woman and girl expose the need to re/articulate gendered categories as sites of fluidity and creation. Although Jordan turns to trans identities to help think through her alienated relationships to normative constructions of femininity; however, it is important to note that she does not self-identify as transgender. I understand Jordan’s complex gendered self-identifications as a response to the lack of wider societal protections that are not afforded to her because of her race and gender rather than as about the ways in which trans identities are claimed in relation to one’s assigned sex identity at birth. I instead read Jordan’s gesture toward transness in ways that signal Hortense Spillers’ (1987) conversation about what slavery made possible in her discussion of the Middle Passage as limbo that rendered the distinction of gender obsolete. Spillers states that, “[u]nder these conditions, one is neither female, nor male, as both subjects are taken into ‘account’ as quantities,” indicating that the “project of African persons” is dependent on processes that dehumanize, deface, and ungender (72).

Other examples where Black trans experiences are brought to the forefront are observable through the work of Kamilah Apong and Brianna Roye who center Black trans visibility in their artwork and arts-based community services. Their interventions importantly reflect how the principle of art as survival practice extends Alice Walker’s (1983) commitment to the “survival and wholeness of entire people” by ensuring that Black trans and non-binary people are not left behind (xi). Apong’s community-based work for Black 2SLGBTQ+ artists through *Lil’ Sis* offers trans-specific information and resources, such as safe sex guides, fantasy games, teen survival guides, and access to the record label Trans Trenderz (Little Sister 2020).

Roye's commitment to "positions where it shows the realness" through her *Out of Many, One People* photography series also exemplify second-generation Caribbean Canadian perspectives that capture fluid and shifting constructions of Blackness in trans-affirming ways (Roye 2020). In stating that "queerness is so sexualized… we're just seen as sexual deviants which is really wrong… sexuality is okay. Nudity, sex… that is okay. That's normal," Roye acknowledges how Black queer and trans people break apart limiting categories of gender, sex, and sexuality (2020). Apong and Roye's transformational shifts must also then be read as a critique of the societal constructions that foreclose wider Black experiences in both Canada and the Caribbean. As McKittrick (2006) asks, "[c]an black women's geographies also open up the possibility to rethink, and therefore respatialize, our present sociogeographic organization?" (122). I connect Apong's and Roye's interventions to the ongoing second-generation refusal of anti-Black logics which render Black queer and trans spaces and places within the realm of the ungeographic as a response to McKittrick's inquiry.

II. Art as Self-Love

My second principle of a Black women's arts praxis, art as self-love, borrows from Jennifer C. Nash's (2013) Black feminist love-politics that frames understandings of self with an emphasis on self-love. In this way, my dissertation advocates for Black women to put themselves first as an expression of self-love. A Black woman who makes the decision to put herself first makes a radical choice to refuse the normalized ways that "Black women and girls shoulder the burden of others and are primarily caregivers," often forgetting "attention to their own health and happiness" (Kaltefleiter & Alexander 2019, 200). Black women, by putting themselves first, confront stereotypical constructions that seek to lock them in perpetual states of servitude through an espousal of the myth of the "strong Black woman" (Harris 1995).

Understanding that Black communities are themselves in need of love—as something to be "given up" for the preservation of community (Nash 12)—the principle of art as self-love posits the need for Black women to love themselves first, in order to foster sustainable care-work practices within their wider communities. Black women self-prioritizing seeks to problematize the relationship between self and community, not in a way that privileges one over the other, but that rather reassesses this codependent relationship in less draining ways.

In focusing on care-work, this dissertation importantly acknowledges how 2020, the year in which I started writing the first draft of this chapter, marked another wave of social unrest sparked by the killing of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, just two of the many unarmed Black men and women killed by police in North America. The worldwide protests that took place in response to these murders indicate the transnational nature of the experiences relating to increased forms of violence and surveillance against Black communities. Additional victims of police-related violence in Canada, such as Andrew Loku, Jermaine Carby, Regis Korchinski-Paquet, D'Andre Campbell, Abdirahman Abdi, Pierre Coriolan and Junior Manon (who was killed on the York University campus grounds by officers from the Toronto Police Services), confirm the specific ways police-related deaths take place in Canada. In October 2020 alone, three people were killed by Canadian police: Anthony Aust from Ottawa and Matthew Sheffield from Montreal who were both Black men; and Coco, a Black Trans woman from Toronto. In January 2022, Moses Erhirhie was also shot and killed by York Regional Police in Markham during an altercation while investigating a "suspicious person" (Grimaldi); and in February 2022, Latjor Tuel, a Sudanese man who struggled with mental health issues was killed by Calgary police. These realities prove how Canada's anti-Black racism problem continues to endanger Black communities.

In the midst of the widespread pushback against these Black Canadian community injustices, and in solidarity with other Black communities globally, Anique Jordan (2020) wrote a public statement, identifying the toll these realities take on Black (Canadian) women. Her words were originally part of an Instagram post which was later turned into a large sign posted alongside the building of Nia Centre for the Arts on Oakwood Avenue in Toronto. The last lines of her text state simply: Our mothers have told you they are scared./ We are scared./ We a retired, so tired./ We have done enough (HIGH PRIESTESS 2020). To some Black women, even the word tired seems to be an understatement because no one word can truly capture the psychological and physical impact they experience in "the afterlife of slavery" (Hartman 2007).

Fig. 7. Photograph of my brother, Patrick "BJ" Brown Jr., Nia Centre for the Arts, 2020.

The entirety of Jordan's letter captures the feelings of Black Canadian women who continuously practice what Sharpe (2016) describes as lateral care and are tired as a result. Drawing on Nash's (2013) description of love as "a politics of claiming, embracing, and restoring the wounded black female self" (3), while privileging self-love above all other forms (Nash 9–10), I offer the principle of self-love as a healing practice rooted in the arts for the "equal parts exhaustion, anger, hurt and disbelief" that Black Canadian women routinely bear and that Jordan (2020) describes.

The idea of a Black Canadian woman rooted in herself is far from selfish or self-centered, because that self-love is also critical for care practices within Black communities. Jordan demonstrates this, for example, in her claim that she is writing primarily for young Black girls:

> When I do make work… whose eyes do I want this to really reach? I think about a young version of myself. Young, dark skin Black girl. Does she feel reflected? Does she see something that gives her a different way to understand the world? Is she learning something from this?
>
> Does this moment of encountering this work, or this image, or whatever, does it become a mark in her memory? Does it transform something for her?...So, in that way, I guess Black girls are kind of at the center of what I do. (Jordan 2020)

Here, Jordan's use of art as self-care translates into a broader community care for young Black girls who she sees as a reflection of "a young version" of herself. This is one demonstration of the principle of art as self-love as both inward and outward facing.

A Black woman who "[l]oves herself. *Regardless*" (Walker 1983, xii) is significant in my understanding of self-reclamation. Walker's emphasis on the word "*Regardless*" suggests that practicing self-love as a Black woman is a nonlinear process and there are fraught moments where this, indeed, becomes difficult. bell hooks (2005) also describes the difficulty of self-love as originating from the ways in which Black people have been wounded by forces of domination—white supremacy, racism, sexism, capitalism, and patriarchy—that impact their well-being in both material and psychological ways (4). In response to these wounds, hooks (2005) highlights processes of "Black female self-recovery" that prioritize healing as a liberating political process, one where wellness becomes an "act of political resistance" (7).

My research is interested in highlighting the role that art plays in this healing process and shares Turner's observation that, "art can be a space to create the possibilities for healing and reckoning" (2020).

The discussion of Black women's self-love should not necessarily be read as a promotion of grandiose gestures. Mental health advocate Stacy-Ann Buchanan (2020) often shares simple self-care tips in her tweets, such as "going to solo dinners, movies and museums, having staycations & spa time…" and offers these as everyday examples of how women can show love to themselves, reflecting hooks' (2005) notion of healing and wellness as political resistance. Buchanan's advice also demonstrates that even the most ordinary acts are applicable expressions of self-love. I also believe that self-love must be cultivated on a regular basis and often ask other Black women questions about how they purposefully cultivate self-love. I choose the term "cultivate" rather than other words such as "practice" to acknowledge that self-love is reciprocal and requires consistent intentionality. I argue that Black women artists continue to carve out spaces for themselves and Black girls by asking useful questions such as the ones raised by Jordan. **L**oving yourself at all costs is a necessary aspect of resisting overlapping forms of societal oppression and experiencing healing from the physical and psychological scars inflected along the way. In other words, self-love is self-reclamation in practice.

In addition to asking important questions through a process of self-reflection and self-reclamation as Jordan does, Brianna Roye demonstrates how artistic community impact through self-love also occurs when Black Canadian women center themselves and their differences in their artistic work:

> There isn't really much history, or representation or even photographs or essays or series documenting queer Caribbean people. Why is that? Why is that so hard to find?

> Why not start that documentation process now… for the next generation who is going to look back on that and use that as a reference point…? That next generation is going to be able to hopefully be more free, have that reference point to look to that we didn't necessarily have. (Roye 2020)

As a Black Jamaican Canadian queer woman, taking the initiative to create her own reference point for future generations, Roye insists that second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women must come to realize themselves as the very models they need, like Toni Morrison did. The close relationship to their lived experiences that the participating artists maintain in their work in many ways proves that they are all trailblazing "models" in their own right.

These different expressions of self-love that Jordan and Roye articulate demonstrate how Black women artists maintain strategic relationships with the past in ways that inform their work in the present. Drawing from the past operates within a self-reclaiming politic because it is rooted in the artists' girlhoods. Jordan's and Roye's acknowledgements of the gaps in their histories are a necessary first step to reclaiming their voice and presence in Canada and the Caribbean. Roye's critique of the invisibility of Caribbean queer experiences and Jordan's critical inquiries exemplify useful guiding questions for the work they produce and exemplify various ways of exhibiting the principle of art as self-love. This Black women's art praxis, as I have demonstrated, importantly recognizes how artwork that centers the self and cultivates self-love is simultaneously rooted in the wider community.

III. Art as a Radical Care Ethic

Art as a radical care ethic is primarily interested in the wider impact of Black women's artistic interventions by centering the ripple effect of their work and exploring how art functions beyond the artists themselves.

Extending the previous principle of art as self-love, the principle of art as a radical care ethic underscores that it is, indeed, possible for Black women to both care for themselves and their communities in sustainable ways. This principle, therefore, understands radical community care as a reflection of what might be possible when Black women prioritize their health and well-being at all costs. While it could be argued that the principles of art as self-love and art as a radical care ethic should be combined because of their close relationship, I deliberately choose to keep them separate in an effort to draw closer attention to the fact that Black women need to take better care of themselves because of the likelihood that others won't. bell hooks (2005) identifies this societal tendency to disregard care for Black women in the multiple forces of domination that make Black women's self-love and healing difficult and non-linear.

Brianna Roye's cognizance of how the Black women who raised her continue to inform her ideas of Black womanhood and collective care demonstrates the complex realities of a radical care ethic: "I've realized that growing up, I grew up in a single parent home where my mom raised me, well, women—my mom, my aunt and my grandma raised me. So, we have this idea of what it means to be a Black woman from birth: strong, resilient, nurturing, always taking care of things. But sometimes we need to be taken care of ourselves, you know? We need to have the grace that we extend, extended back to us" (Roye 2020). Roye's experiences of being surrounded by a collective of Black women mother figures in addition to her own mother open up conversations for thinking about practices of care that are not one-sided. Although her response sheds light on the ways in which Black women, in particular, assume societal roles that require them to be "strong, resilient, nurturing, always taking care of things," Roye's awareness that Black women also need to be taken care of illuminate the integral foundation of the principle of art as a radical care ethic that is grounded in reciprocity. In other words, the principle of art as

a radical care ethic maintains a capacious understanding of care that is relational and reciprocal. It, thus, operates within West African understandings of ubuntu, meaning “I am because you are.” In my work, I am seeking to probe Roye’s description of the Black women who raised her by considering other possibilities that become available if this care she demands from others is first made available internally. Put another way, I am interested in using the principle of art as radical care ethic to demonstrate that Black women’s contributions toward community care are most radical, ethical, and sustainable when they take care of themselves first.

Black women’s privileging of themselves first in order to better care for others is visible through Shi Wisdom’s discussion about how being a mother significantly impacts her work, understanding of herself, and her approaches to life more broadly:

> It has made me more conscious of time... Even though at the moment I’m not an active artist… because I’ve kind of leaned more toward teaching vocals… when I do, do things involved in making music, I’ve always been particular about the jobs that I take on. Because I’m a Black woman in this industry, you can’t take on everything because people are crazy. I’m even more so like that because I actually don’t have time to waste on foolishness. I don’t have the emotional capacity to get into things with people the way that I used to because I have to save that for my child. I don’t have time for you and your foolishness. Like back in the day, I would argue you down. I. Will. Argue. You. Down! But now, I will say my one-two, and then you’re going to catch this swift block because I don’t have the time. Not even with people who I’m working with. Look, if you are draining my energy, that’s energy that doesn’t belong to you. It belongs to my child. (2020)

Wisdom's awareness of her inability to take on everything as a Black woman in the music industry highlights how her complex intersections force her to be protective of her time and energy. In noting that "people are crazy," Wisdom names the "superexploitation" of Black women that Claudia Jones critiqued as a capitalist requirement forcing them to work for immeasurable hours without compensation (Boyce Davies 2007, 2).

These exploitative realities that Black women face challenge the myth of the strong Black woman that assumes that they can take on everything that comes their way (Harris 1995). Women, like Wisdom, who save their energy for things that are most important to them, offer a different model for the survival of Black women and Black communities. While her declarations that "I don't have time for you and your foolishness" might be read by some people as her being "really bright and facety,"[5] Wisdom remains indifferent to such interpretations of her views and concludes that "it is what it is" (2020). The unapologetic clarity of Wisdom's vision and her enforcement of personal boundaries are refreshing since when Black women make demands, voice their opinions, or dictate their needs, they are often met with anger or aggression.

Conversations with the other artists confirm this view. Kamiah Apong explains how people react to Black women who enforce boundaries: "For Black women… making boundaries is not something people like. It makes people very upset" (2020). These negative responses have to do with the fact that when Black women speak, they disrupt a whole set of overlapping power structures that aim to silence them. Davis (2018), for example, highlights that, "[w]hen a Black woman signals her desire to speak, everyone is afraid because they never know in any given moment who or what she will indict: racism, sexism, classism, child abuse, or police violence.

[5] "Facety" in the Jamaican language, which is often used as a stand in for a Black vernacular in Toronto, means rude, self-centered or inconsiderate. In Jamaican speech, the word "bright"—as in knowing more than is good for one—often carries the same connotations.

Precisely, because there is so much pain scripted onto the Black female body, Black women's voices and bodies are always accusatory" (73). Both Apong and Wisdom exemplify the power of Black women's voices in their insistence that Black women boldly articulate their needs regardless of the repercussions. These bold acts include the courageous voices of Black women who are strong and "loud," as well as the voices of Black women who are soft-spoken. My emphasis on reciprocity and relationality in the principle of art as a radical care ethic draws attention to both Black women's loud and quiet expressions. In whatever tone or volume, Black women's voices defy the logics that sustain inequitable societal power structures. Their accusatory voices and bodies, as Davis (2018) notes, are required to develop safer spaces for Black women to inhabit.

Additional examples of art as radical care are reflected in Shi Wisdom's insistence that her music is created specifically for Black communities:

> When I make music… I am not thinking about white people at all… I'm only thinking about Black people and how Black people are going to receive it. And that's the only thing that I care about. And anybody else who likes it, then they like it. But you're not my first thought. I'm not thinking about none of them…They're not thinking about me! I'm just thinking about my people and how we're going to receive it. How it's going to make us feel… Is my brother going to be able to relate? Is it going to make them feel down? Is it going to uplift them? I'm just thinking about us when I make music. That's it. (2020)

Wisdom's assertion that "[t]hey're not thinking about me!" signals the routine silencing and invisibility that Black Canadian women experience in Canadian society. I, therefore, understand Wisdom's creative intentionality as a direct response to the ways in which Black Canadian geographies have been marked as "absented presence" (McKittrick 2002, 32).

Art as a radical care ethic centers precisely these practices of artistic refusal of the anti-Black logics that render Black Canadian presences invisible. Wisdom's effort to produce music that speaks directly to what she understands as her "community" exemplifies how Black Canadian women artists routinely think outside of themselves to practice carework. This radical care ethic is, however, also critical of Black women's tendency to do this work in ways that are often not reciprocated. While Wisdom's community care-work efforts are well intentioned and impactful, we also need to consider whether community members show up and care for Black women in the same way. [6]

Sha'Dawn Battle (2014) states that, "[w]hen power lands in the hands of many black males, women have paid the price" (83). This grave price confirms why Crenshaw's (1991) concept of "intersectionality" is still necessary for understanding patriarchal violence and the ways in which Black women's race and gender intersect to demarcate their unique experiences in white supremacist societies. Crenshaw (1991) notes that, "[t]he direct assault on Black womanhood is less frequently seen as an assault on the Black community" (1273). A reassessment of "the Black community"—who counts versus who gets excluded and for what reasons—is thus long overdue. I suggest that the principle of art as radical care might facilitate possibilities that attend to the different ways that Blackness is understood, practiced, and articulated with an understanding that the societal differences sustained by forms of oppression cannot be appropriately addressed unless care is reciprocal and relational.

[6] The 2020 murder of United States-based activist, Oluwatoyin Ruth Salau/"Toyin" who was held captive, sexually assaulted, and eventually murdered by Aaron Glee Jr. proves there is much room for improvement. They met at a bus stop in Florida where he learned that "she had been sexually assaulted early that morning and did not have permanent housing" (Boynton 2020).

IV. Art as Embodied History

Black experience in any modern city or town in the Americas is a haunting. One enters a room and history follows; one enters a room and history precedes.

– Dionne Brand, A Map to the Door of No Return

Greif travelled as well. The dead do not like to be forgotten.

– Jacqui M. Alexander, Pedagogies of Crossing

I continue the conversation about care-work by exploring the extent to which embodied history and memory might inform Black Caribbean Canadian women's art practices.
By considering the extent to which "spirituality" is framed as "the basis of Art" (Walker 1983, 233), the principle of art as embodied history explores the relationship between ancestry and embodied memory to bridge the gap between art and spirituality.[7]

By illuminating the inexplicable/mysterious driving forces that compel some of the contributing artists to create, I suggest that these creative impulses might be sparked by ancestral specters of the formerly enslaved. In other words, the principle of art as embodied history considers the contemporary significance of the Door of No Return and the Middle Passage. These historical connections illuminate how second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women artists resist the "conventions of antiblackness" (Sharpe 2016, 21) that are embedded in a worldwide normalization of Black suffering (Hartman 2007, 122).

[7] My use of the term "spiritual" derives from the ways in which Black women routinely use "spirit knowledge" to better understand their lives and thus render the spiritual as epistemological (Alexander 2005, 299, 293). Njoki Nathani Wane (2007) further substantiates Alexander's (2005) viewpoint by outlining spirituality as a discourse, centered in the lives of African Canadian women who "acknowledge spiritual practices that have survived colonial and neo-colonial gendered, classist, and racist oppressions" (48). My use of the term also shares Yvonne Bobb-Smith's (2007) understanding that spirituality operates beyond institutionalized religion: "My spirituality is my joy in achieving as much positivity as there can be in my life. The spiritual, for me, is within my consciousness of my position in a world, a world of both fairness and injustice" (65-66).

The Door of No Return and the Middle Passage collectively signify a necessary point of departure since they have both literally and figuratively contributed to the formulation of African diasporas and global constructions of Blackness. Drawing on Hortense Spillers' (1987) notion of the Middle Passage as a sort of limbo, I suggest that art as embodied history contends with the extent to which African peoples were "in movement across the Atlantic, but they were also nowhere at all"; they were, "removed from the indigenous land and culture, and [were] not-yet 'American' either" (Spillers 1987, 72).

This framing of the Middle Passage as limbo works alongside Dionne Brand's identification of the Door of No Return as a form of consciousness (Brand 2001, 24; Sharpe 2016, 141). These combined frameworks help to illustrate the elusive and/or spiritual moments that surfaced during my fieldwork, such as the contributing artists' description of being led to create without knowing where the source of their inspiration came from. In suggesting that those inspirational sources reflect a type of haunting, I am specifically interested in how the principle of art as embodied history might uncover strategies for how Black Caribbean Canadian women artists, as direct descendants of the formerly enslaved, use art to pay close attention to their own relationships to the legacies of chattel slavery and settler-colonialism. The mystic origins of "Miss Canadiana" (2002), Camille Turner's beauty queen performance where she assumes the role of guardian of "all things Canadian" (qtd. in Mohamed 2005), for example, resulted from Turner's inability for many years to rid herself of a feeling, compelling her to create and perform this character. The spirituality embedded within the principle of art as embodied history contends with examples like this to articulate those unidentifiable processes of art-making. When asked if she knew who, or what, or where the source of the compelling creative force driving her work might be coming from, Turner explained:

> What is it that actually happens?... It's like I listen for the inspiration or the voices. It's just an act of listening and being bold enough to put it into actuality. Do what it says… For me it's listening to the voices and doing what they say. Yes, it is mysterious. I feel like Miss Canadiana, for me, was a gift. It was something that came to me and I'm really glad I listened to it. The idea for me just seemed so crazy but it was something that compelled me that I had to do. It hounded me for years. I didn't just do it like that. It took me a long time to actually step into it, but I'm so glad I did because it wasn't just for me. I see how it impacted other people as well. I was a vehicle for it, but it wasn't just for me. I feel very grateful. (2020)

Turner also added that her method of listening is inspired by the work of Juliane Okot Bitek who shared with Turner that her creative process entails the acknowledgement that she is not alone and that practices of art making require collaboration (2020). The "forces" then that compel some Black women to create are part of a collaborative process requiring an intentional listener to act as a vehicle for what is to come (Turner 2020). Turner centers herself by becoming a vehicle for the production of something that is meant not only for her, but also for her community. Turner's ability to listen to "the voices" of those she cannot see but can hear, therefore, constitutes a spiritual element in her art practice. I also read the "Miss Canadiana" (2002) performance as an act of radical care since it gives Black Canadians permission to claim space while demonstrating how one might live relationally by contending with the realities of living within the confines of a setter-colonial state.

The principle of art as embodied history also reveals the complexities behind authorship, control and authority.

The subtitle for M. NourbeSe Philip's *Zong!* (2008), "As told to author by Setaey Adamu Boateng," exemplifies some of this complexity. In this collection of poems, Philip sits with the history of the slave ship Zong and the details of Gregson v. Gilbert (also commonly referred to as the Zong case.) Philip returns to this case in order to remember the African peoples who were deliberately thrown overboard in the Middle Passage as insurance.[8] Since Boateng represents the voice(s) of the ancestors aboard the Zong, the subtitle for this text suggests that Philip does not see herself as author, but rather as a transcriber with limited control over the creation process.

Sandra Brewster describes a similar collaborative process in the creation of her gel transfer photo-based series Blur. During, "Artist's Talk," a conversation with writer and poet Canisia Lubrin at the Art Gallery of Ontario in 2019, Brewster elaborated on the "different areas of control, and lack of control, or limited amount of control" she had throughout the process of making Blur:

> I have control in the initial process. I take the image of the person. I scale the image, so I'm doing all of this digital work at the beginning of the process. Then I print off these images. This is all controlled, right? But there may be minor things that I don't have control over… The second part of the process is adhering the image to the surface. In the case of the wall transfers, I printed out these large panels then I add a gel medium to the paper. I add it also the wall and I'm taking these larges pieces of paper and I am adhering them to the wall. There's limited amount of control because the thing is so big and I'm here managing everything, and I'm hoping there's enough gel medium to transfer a sufficient amount of ink from the paper onto the surface that I'm working on.

[8] Philip (2008) uses the 1783 Gregson v. Gilbert case to outline the law governing insurance contracts at time by noting that, "the deliberate drowning of 150 people was not murder, but merely the disposition of property in a time of emergency to ensure preservation of the rest of the 'cargo.'" (191). This poem by Philip and Boateng instead challenges the state of non-being that Black people were subject to by identifying and critiquing the anti-Black logics which made it possible for the owners of the Zong to "be paid for murdering 150 Africans" (191).

> When I wash off the paper after the whole thing dries… I am not absolutely sure of what is to come. It's always like a nerve-wracking process for me every single time I'm doing these pieces because I'm not sure if enough ink has adhered. I don't know if there'll be too many creases and such, and if the image will not give the impression that I want it to. (2019)

Brewster further explains that the cracks and creases that appear throughout the blurs are symbolic of "change that is occurring within that movement from one place to the other place, and therefore it's conjuring up all of these interpretations about what happens when you leave a home and you establish a new home somewhere else. At times you're picking up from where you're ending up in. You're leaving part of yourself somewhere else" (Artist's Talk). Brewster's work is, therefore, deeply interested in various kinds of physical and spiritual movements that inform Black diasporic life.

I am interested, in particular, in what Brewster's notion of "conjuring" means in relation to the principle of art as embodied history. I suggest that Brewster's Blur not only engages with the past and present but also illuminates the intersections of a second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women artist's practice of recovery. The processes of movement that Brewster notes not only include the forced movement of enslaved Africans who were dispersed throughout the Americas during chattel slavery, but also the (induced) movement of those who later made the active choice to leave homes in the Caribbean post-emancipation and post-independence. Whether or not Brewster's blurs turned out in the way she initially intended, in her effort to capture the overlapping and interrelated histories of Black movement, she nevertheless provides us with important insights about African diasporic identity formation and place-making despite and in spite of the violent legacies of slavery and settler-colonialism.

What the principle of art as embodied history allows me to do, then, is further link Brewster's artistic conjuring practices to Turner's practice of listening to voices and Jordan's spiritual grounding. Using this principle to examine second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women's artistic methods allows me to think about how an artist might become a vehicle. Since the principle of art as embodied history underscores the fact that second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women's creative work is always already implicated in wider discourses about the histories of chattel slavery and settler colonialism, then listening, transcribing and/or conjuring are important processes employed by these artists.
These processes demonstrate the principle of art as embodied history by showing how Black Caribbean Canadian women artists allow themselves to become vehicles in service of a wider community, both past and present.

Another example of the Black Canadian women's artistic practice of "listening to voices" occurs in Anique Jordan's exhibit, *Ban' Yuh Belly* (2019), which showcases black and white self-portraits and archival objects. When asked about the extent to which spirituality plays a role in her artistic practice, Jordan explains:

> I feel like everything that I've done, I've been sort of ushered toward. I don't know where Ban' Yuh Belly came from. I don't know at all, to be completely honestly with you. I've spent months, trying to figure out what I'm going to do, what I was thinking, what images I'm interested in, and then all of a sudden it just appeared bizarrely to me. I think that everything in my life really has been something that is way beyond me, something that is telling me that this is the direction that you're supposed to be going. This is the type of work that you're supposed to be doing. And I think if it wasn't for that direction, I don't know if I would be working as an artist…

> So, I would definitely say spirituality is a big piece, one that I really deterred from in the last while a good bit, but I'm desperate to realign myself in so many ways and to spend the time growing my spiritual practice because it's so nurturing to me and so grounding. (Jordan 2020)

Jordan's response acknowledges how her spiritual awareness informs her sense of self and her artistry, and I read the unexpected discovery of *Ban' Yuh Belly* that Jordan is "ushered toward" as mirroring Turner's experience of listening to voices. I am using the acknowledgement of spirituality in this section to ponder whether or not the peculiar experiences of these artists can be categorized as a type of haunting.

Avery Gordon (2008) describes haunting as "a frightening experience," one that is differentiated from trauma since it produces "something-to-be-done" (xvii). This production is said to be directly in response to the "singular yet repetitive instances when home becomes unfamiliar, when your bearings on the world lose direction, when the over-and-done-with comes alive, when what's been in your blind spot comes into view" (xvi). I understand the work of the contributing artists, therefore, as iterations of the "something-to-be-done" that Gordon describes. Those perceived moments that are "over-and-done-with" are made visible through "the afterlife of slavery" (Hartman 2007) while "the weather" (Sharpe 2016) shows how such realizations habitually "come alive" in the present. Gordon's (2008) notion of haunting clarifies how second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women artists might confront the intergenerational trauma that is symptomatic of "the weather" (Sharpe 2016) in "the afterlife of slavery" (Hartman 2007).

The ability to contend with such haunting legacies is exemplified through Philip's description of Zong! (2008) as a "hauntological" text: "I come – albeit slowly—to the understanding that Zong! is hauntological; it is a work of haunting, a wake of sorts, where the spectres of the undead make themselves present" (201).

I am interested, particularly, in the future possibilities that become available when moments of conjuring and listening are read as indications of what Philip (2008) identifies as the ongoing presence of "the spectres of the undead" (201). Sharpe explains in her discussion of residence time that:

> Even if those Africans who were in the holds, who left something of their prior selves in those rooms as a trace to be discovered, and who passed through the doors of no return did not survive the holding and the sea, they, like us, are alive in hydrogen, in oxygen; in carbon, in phosphorous, and iron; in sodium and chlorine. This is what we know about those Africans thrown, jumped, dumped overboard in Middle Passage; they are with us still, in the time of the wake, known as residence time. (18)

Through her specification that "...the atoms of those people who were thrown overboard are out there in the ocean even today" (40), Sharpe makes tangible the spiritual and/or hauntological aspects of second-generation Caribbean women's art. I suggest that Emilio Amideo's (2021) understanding of the sea as "fluid and capable of overflowing boundaries" (1), by connecting the memories of African peoples across the Caribbean and the Americas, stretches Sharpe's notion of residence time, extending this hauntology and bridging the divide between second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women artists and their ancestral spectres.

Fig. 8. Hellshire Beach, Portmore, Jamaica

As Dionne Brand (2001) explains, haunting is also present within the "Door of No Return as consciousness" (24), making poems such as Brand's "Verso 55" in *The Blue Clerk* (2018) possible. In this poem, the narrator recalls the experience of visiting and/or returning to a castle where enslaved Africans had been held captive prior to being boarded on a ship destined for the Americas via the Middle Passage. In the last stanza of the poem, the narrator states, "[w]e all stood there for some infinite time. We did weep but that is nothing in comparison" (224).
I use this brief reference to Brand's poem to contextualize the relationship between the haunting specters that remain and the present consciousness of Black Canadian women artists of Caribbean descent.

Similar references to haunting appear in excerpts of the unpublished poem "Awaken" (2013) written by my own mother, Melody Brown, as a reflection of her first trip to the African continent: "Today I will open myself to you…/ My feet shall walk upon the strength of your back and I will be nourished from the struggles and victories of the many voices silenced and heard" (Brown 2013). I link my mother's imperative to write after her first trip to West Africa, as a descendant of the formerly enslaved in Jamaica, to the stories shared by the participating artists of being hounded and/or ushered toward art creation. If these mysterious/spiritual creative driving forces reflect a form of haunting by formerly enslaved Africans, then my mother, Jordan,

Brewster and Turner all demonstrate how both first and second-generation Black women creatively engage with the Door of No Return and the Middle Passage regardless of whether or not they have visited important historical sites such as the slave castle that Brand's poem references. Ultimately, the principle of art as embodied history signals how we carry our histories within us. As Brand (2001) outlines in the epigraph at the beginning of this section, "Black experience in any modern city or town in the Americas is a haunting" (25). I use the principle of art as embodied history, therefore, to suggest that the physical presence of Black women's bodies in cities and towns of the Americas are always already implicated in this haunting and to pinpoint those particular moments that are hard to describe, but are felt and heard, and demand some form of artistic redress.

Black Caribbean Canadian women's artwork thus reflects the ongoing haunting presences that surround us. I find my mother's (2013) poem particularly interesting because she did not physically visit any slave castles during her travels. However, Brand's "Door of No Return as consciousness" (Brand 2001, 24) allows for the transfer of these experiences through Black women's poetry. Both Brand's and Brown's poems, therefore, signify how grief travels and share strategies for remembering the dead. As M. Jacqui Alexander (2005) reminds us, the dead do not like to be forgotten (289). Second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women's artwork might then provide new ways to remember those who have passed as an act of what Sharpe (2016) describes as "wake work."

Philip (2008) describes the moral framework for Zong! as an attempt to bridge the relationship between the past, present and future while recognizing a "debt or obligation of spirit owed by later to earlier generations" (205).

I read this responsibility as an example of wake work, since embodied memory is required to explicate the specific ways descendants of enslaved Africans, including the contributing artists, remember their ancestors. Michele Johnson (2020) echoes this notion of embodied history in her acknowledgement that someone survived on our behalf, while Philip (2008) reminds us that "the ancients walk within us" (195). The principle of embodied history allows Black Caribbean Canadian women artists to accept these ghostly manifestations as an inheritance from their foremothers, since they too were artists. Clinton Hutton (2007) identifies our ancestors' relationships to the arts by stating that, "[t]o a great extent, the enslaved coped with and resisted slavery and fashioned their being, their agency by embracing/becoming one personality and agency above any other, the artist" (128). This correlation indicates that to exist in this world as a Black person necessitates continuous acts of creativity. In our conversations, Turner beautifully captured that relationship to the past by identifying how prior generations envisioned the future: "I really like to think about the way that our ancestors were always able to conjure the future. If they couldn't conjure the future we would not be here. So, it's paying homage to the capacity within us, and the people that have come before us—that process of being able to understand our capacity for creating worlds" (2020). The principle of art as embodied history, therefore, pays attention to the overlapping methods used by Black women artists to conjure the past in order to create new worlds in the present and future.

CONCLUSION

I developed these four interrelated principles of second-generation Black women's arts praxis—art as survival practice, art as self-love, art as a radical care ethic, and art as embodied history—to specify how Black Caribbean Canadian women artists create their own kinds of freedom.

This impulse toward freedom or the ability to create worlds begins on the African continent, is transferred through the Door of No Return and the Middle Passage, and remains as a present life force in the Americas. By creating as an act of survival, self-love, and radical care, and by connecting their art to the memory of the past through practices of listening, conjuring and grounding, second-generation Caribbean women artists delineate their own trajectories toward freedom and a livable "future now" (Davis 2022, 20). I use these four principles to think about how second-generation Black women's artistic expressions shape their lives and art across the histories and geographies of the African Diaspora. Beginning in this chapter from the assumption that art functions for Black women as survival practice—a deeply relational practice of individual and community care—I continue in the remaining chapters to offer close readings of the artists' work through the principles of art as a radical care ethic (chapter two), art as self-love (chapter three), and art as embodied history (chapter four).

CHAPTER TWO - ART AS A RADICAL CARE ETHIC: UNCOVERING GENDERED RESPONSES TO BLACK CANADIAN COMMUNITY & POLICE VIOLENCE

I mean wake work to be a mode of inhabiting and rupturing this episteme with our known lived and un/imaginable lives. With that analytic we might imagine otherwise from what we know now in the wake of slavery. – Christina Sharpe, In the Wake

Shi Wisdom's (2014) song, "Young Gunner," and Anique Jordan's (2019) *Ban' Yuh Belly* photography exhibit both offer gendered responses to community violence, while shedding light on how Black Canadian communities continue to be policed, surveilled, and systematically underserved. Through an analysis of the music and photography of these artists, I interrogate how art and memory function as relational practice. I demonstrate further how Black women's art serves as an entry point to illuminate the ongoing complexities of community violence and policing as they are experienced by Black communities in Toronto by centering gendered responses to grief through what I theorize in my work as a radical care ethic. My readings of Wisdom's and Jordan's artwork draw on Christina Sharpe's (2016) definition of "wake work," which is a process of seeing, thinking critically about, and imagining how to center the modalities of Black life "lived in, as, under, and despite Black death" (20). In questioning who gets to be remembered and why, I utilize a wake-work methodology to emphasize second-generation Canadian responses to systemic Black erasure while demonstrating how my reading of second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women's art offers us tools in remembrance of all Black lives. These artistic provisions create pathways to contend with and transform the legacies of chattel slavery and colonialism by imaging, re/thinking, and re/articulating Blackness otherwise.

Ban' Yuh Belly and "Young Gunner" clarify the relationship between wake work and art as a radical care ethic by demonstrating how Black women's art becomes central for performing wake work—grieving, remembering, and caring for Black people in the aftermath of conquest and enslavement—in a specifically Canadian context. The close relationship between the principles of radical care and wake work rests on a shared recognition of a communal responsibility that is attentive to Black life. This collective onus is outlined in Sharpe's description of lateral care which takes up questions such as, "[h]ow can we think (and rethink and rethink) care laterally, in the register of the intramural, in a different relation than that of the violence of the state? In what ways do we remember the dead, those lost in the Middle Passage, those who arrived reluctantly, and those still arriving?" (20). This chapter responds to Sharpe's inquiries by reading Wisdom's and Jordan's artwork in ways that offer creative possibilities for rendering Black life in the present and future while critiquing the stereotypical constructions of Black peoples as foreign and subhuman that consequently place them under the constant threat of violence.

I have chosen to bring Wisdom's music and Jordan's photographs in conversation with each other in this chapter to show how they each practice this principle of art as a radical care ethic in different ways. Shi Wisdom's song "Young Gunner" demonstrates community care as a rather singular burden, where she assumes the responsibility of providing advice to Black men and boys concerning their ability to navigate white supremacist systems of capitalism and patriarchy. "Young Gunner" was made to raise awareness about the need for Black men and boys to be attentive to the decisions they make and how these decisions might alter not only their lives but also the lives of entire communities.

Wisdom's relational practice and communal grieving, however, fails to pay sufficient attention to the women who bear the enduring ripple effect of these decisions. Jordan's photographs and installations, on the other hand, move Black women from the periphery to center (hooks 1984) in conversations about community care by laying bare the impact that systemic violence has on Black Canadian women more broadly. My analysis of their work deploys a wake-work method to ensure that this dialogue is not only focused on the aftermath of Black community fear and trauma but also recognizes the imperative for Black Canadian women and their communities to create joy and chart new paths toward a future where they can survive and thrive.

Young Gunner

Don't cry for him Mama

*And n***** don't cry for your brother*

He's in a safe place now

They can't see his face now

They can't run his plates now

– Wisdom And Nevon

Fig. 9. "Young Gunner" still – Shi Wisdom surrounded by Black men and boys, 2014. Copyright © Mark Valino. Courtesy of Shi Wisdom.

Outside of the occasional glimpse of young girls and a hijabi, Shi Wisdom remains the most visible Black woman in this video while countless Black men and boys are showcased throughout. This song overtly illuminates ongoing community violence and policing in the city of Toronto; however, my reading of "Young Gunner" in relation to the principle of art as a radical care ethic, shows how Wisdom's song is also about fostering community bonds. This is reflected in this still (fig. 9) where Wisdom is at the center surrounded by Black men and boys. I read this scene as offering a glimpse into the different ways that Black communities might care for and protect each other in response to systemic anti-black violence. This moment, in particular, reveals that as much as Wisdom assumes responsibility to care for and protect Black men and boys through this very song, they too have a responsibility to reciprocate this ethic of care. In other words, care must be understood as something that is shared—as a relational practice. I read these extensions of care as a method to concretize Black Canadian geographies by showing the ways in which "black identities and places continually emerge despite spatial domination" (McKittrick 2002, 29). "Young Gunner," dramatizes this spatial domination by outlining the realities of Black men's and boys' relationships to drug trafficking and abuse, constructions of Black masculinity, and how Black communities resist anti-Black violence and policing.

"Who shot ya?" the repeated question heard throughout the song, while sounds of gunshots echo in the background, overlap black and white scenes in the video depicting the Toronto neighbourhood of Parkdale (Wisdom and Nevon 2014). Parkdale is considered a municipal "priority neighbourhood" in downtown Toronto requiring extra support to improve factors like civic engagement, food security, healthcare and economic opportunities (UrbanArts).

In addition to this grayscale landscape, hints of yellow highlight the literal and/or figurative gun, which makes this overall Young Gunner narrative possible. The gun's presence allows me to locate Judith Nicholson's (2016) discussion of gunscapes where the gun functions as a technology of race, one that carries the "implied criminality of black mobilities" specifically in Parkdale (558). The racial technology operating within Parkdale's gunscape explicitly shows how the gun continues to "mediate black im/mobilities" regardless of whether or not a gun is physically present (Nicholson 554). The gun's continuous weaving in and out of the music video also shows how the deadly impact of police encounters, which have resulted in the death of Black boys, such as twelve-year-old Tamir Rice in Cleveland, Ohio, in 2014, must be extended beyond the context of the United States by exposing how these same threats operate on Canadian soil. Due to the ongoing white supremacist silencing of Black presences in Canada, Shi Wisdom's "Young Gunner" sonically demands the recognition of Black presence as multifaceted, complex and undeniable, thus, practicing Katherine McKittrick's (2007) description of music a "geographic act… an available space through which blackness can be read as an integral and meaningful part of the landscape" (138).

In my analysis of "Young Gunner," I am, therefore, interested in how Wisdom represents urban Black Canadian geographies, paying specific attention to the video's portrayal of a Black boy traversing Parkdale's streets. I read the boy's joyful, purposeful and confident demeanor in contrast to the normative ways that Parkdale is constructed as unsafe. The stills below juxtapose my Google search of the words "Parkdale," "Toronto," and "CP24" that result in headlines, such as "2 people arrested after shots fired"; "Man seriously Injured in Parkdale stabbing," et cetera (fig. 10) and images of the boy (fig. 11 & 12). These narratives display a discrepancy between normalizing discourses in the media and the realities of Black Canadian life.

This discrepancy is further explained in Safiya Noble's (2018) notion of "algorithmic oppression" which sheds light on the extent to which online search results reinforce oppressive social and economic relations. Noble's term allows for a critique of societal assumptions concerning what constitutes fact in our online engagements by exposing a societal misconception that the data sorted by search engines, like Google, are neutral (4, 10). Wisdom's depiction of the child in the "Young Gunner" music video, therefore, offers alternate perspectives of Black life in Parkdale and scripts in the complex Black experiences that are rendered invisible in our media encounters.

Fig. 10. Screenshot of google search, 2022.

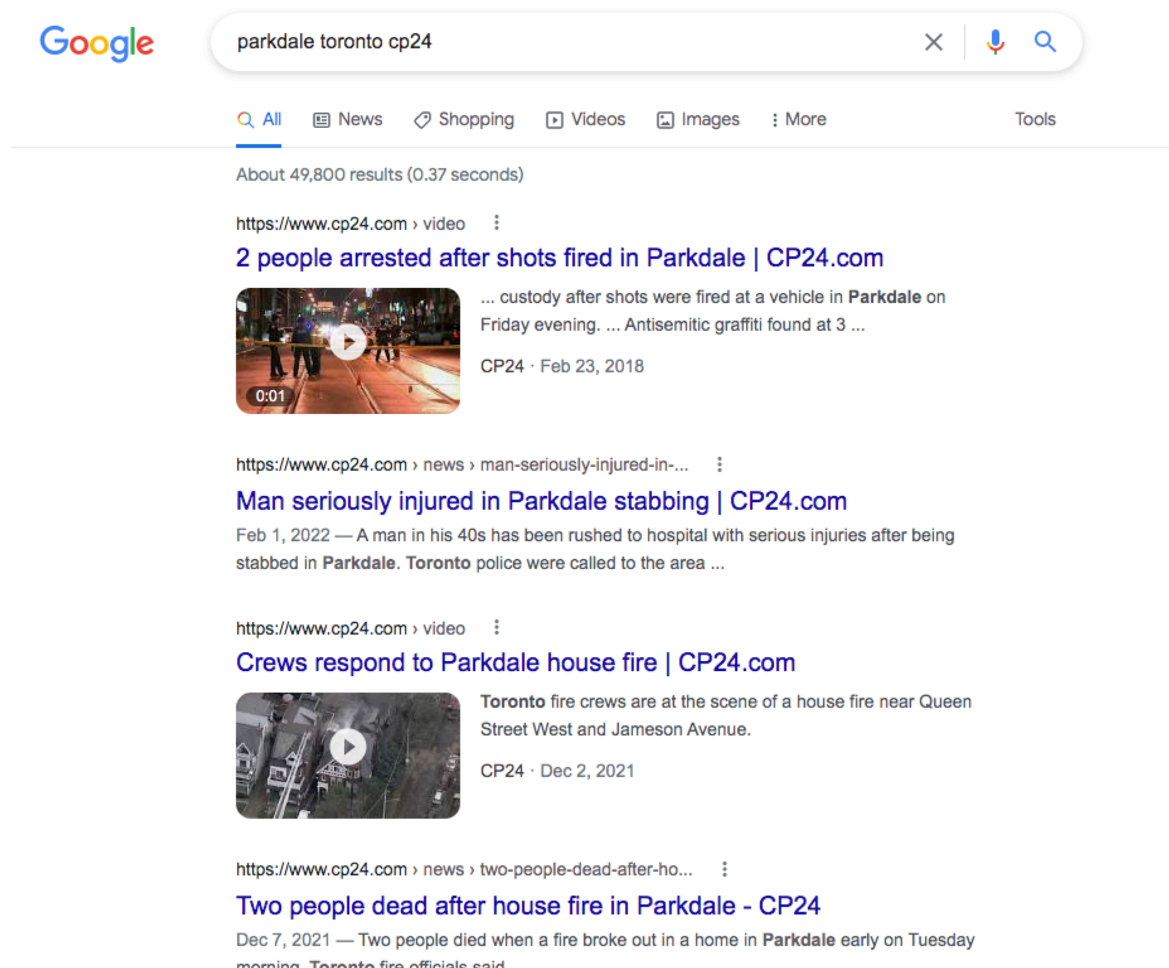

Fig. 11 & 12. “Young Gunner” stills – Boy watching street game of chess and traversing Parkdale street, 2014. Copyright © Mark Valino. Courtesy of Wisdom.

Rinaldo Walcott (2009) also raises questions that are worth posing in relation to this song, such as, “[w]hat makes a black man?” while further asking how Black masculinity might be defined and (re)imagined (80). Toronto singer, Nevon who is featured in the "Young Gunner" track, has a verse in which he rhymes, “[t]hey say you're a bad man/So you think you’re a bad man/Now you act like a bad man.” This line answers Walcott’s inquiry by outlining how Canadian society constructs Black men and boys as inherently “bad” (Wisdom and Nevon). This construction of Black masculinity is further echoed in the lyrics toward the end of the first verse which use the adjectives “bad” and “Black” interchangeably: “Look at you now you’re a bad man/A bad man/A Black man” (Wisdom and Nevon). Society's negative constructions of Black masculinity are facilitated by neo-liberal discourses that oscillate between the dominant portrayal of “bad” Black males and occasional “good” ones. This Black masculine dichotomy is what permits the justification of racialized and gendered inequalities that pathologize Black Canadian communities while the systemic and institutionalized racism they face are rendered invisible (Tabi and Gosine 525–27).

Andrea Davis (2006) further argues that Blackness is constructed as inherently criminal, while linking these stereotypes to a specifically Jamaican context, noting that "Jamaican men have come to represent for many white, as well as middle-class black Canadians, a deep fear of black masculinity—the kind of masculinity that has to be kept in check and guarded lest it upset the delicate balance of this liberal democratic state" (23). This societal belief that Black (Jamaican) masculinity must be kept in check not only solidifies the ongoing discriminatory practices of racial profiling, but also constructs Black identities as un-Canadian (Davis 23; Maynard 84–88).

Frances Henry and Carol Tator (2005) situate this anti-Black racist practice of alienation within a discourse of domination and state that, "[t]his is a polarizing strategy that serves to distinguish between those who are included in the construct of the 'imagined community' of Canadians, who are the law-abiding, moral, and honourable citizens" and racialized others (106). In the process of eschewing Black people from this imagined Canadian community, Black people become rendered as problems, needing to be fixed/policed. Henry and Tator and Davis collectively identify the specific implications of this societal violence and processes of racialization on second-generation Canadians and generations to follow by specifying ongoing anxieties about claims to citizenship and constructions of national identity that can have traumatizing repercussions. These anxieties are seen in the complex self-identifications outlined by the artists themselves in my introductory chapter. The fourth chapter of this dissertation directly responds to these anxieties by using the principle of art as embodied history to offer more capacious understandings of "Canadianness."

The lines from the "Young Gunner" chorus shed light on these second-generation questions of belonging and ongoing struggles for citizenship:

"CP24/ Look at your face all on the news young gunner you ain't safe anymore/ Neither are all your brothers they can't tell one from the other, no" (Wisdom and Nevon). I couple these lines with selected stills (fig. 13) displaying an array of Black men and boys of various skin shades, ages, hairstyles, and facial features. The images and lyrics together underscore the fact that these differences become obscured during routine police interactions, such as when Black men and boys are apprehended and carded because they supposedly "fit the description" of someone engaged in criminal activity.

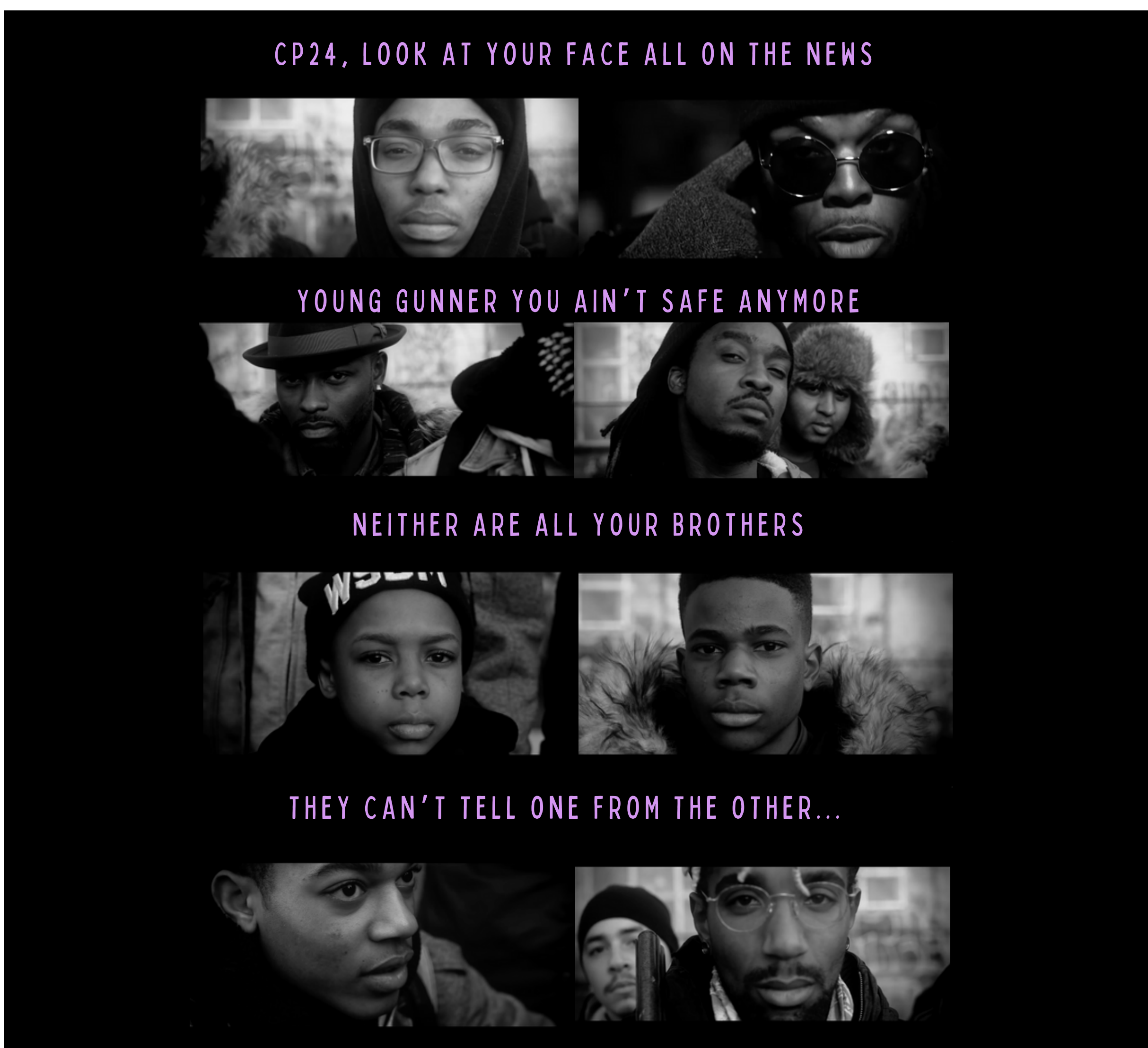

Fig. 13. Collage of "Young Gunner" stills – A various array of Black men and boys, 2014. Copyright © Mark Valino. Courtesy of Shi Wisdom.

This routine surveillance and homogenization of Black peoples in Canada has been extensively critiqued by Desmond Cole (2020) who has been at the forefront of community initiatives rallying against police carding:[9]

> In every single police district in Toronto, police disproportionately stopped and documented Black people and other racialized groups without making arrests or laying criminal charges. During these years [2008-2012], Toronto police carded three times more Black people than the actual Black population in Toronto. The likelihood of police stopping Black people increased in predominately white neighbourhoods, with police responding to calls from white residents about Black people on their streets. (66)

Cole's insight into the realities of Black Canadian life concretely demonstrates the ongoing repercussions of stereotypes that equate Blackness to criminality.

To further contextualize the sentiments of alienation experienced by the second-generation artists I think with—as well as Black people who are frequently subject to practices like carding despite living in Canada that has a normalized reputation as being all-welcoming and multicultural—we must critique how racism functions in a specifically Canadian context. Henry & Tator (2009) define "democratic racism" as an ideology that sustains and justifies the maintenance of two conflicting values: "One set of values consists of a commitment to a democratic society motivated by egalitarian values of fairness, justice, and equality. Conflicting with these liberal values are attitudes and behaviours," that foreground discriminatory treatment against Black, Indigenous and other racialized groups while perpetuating a misconception that because Canada is a liberal and democratic society, it cannot be racist (380).

[9] Cole defines carding as, "…the police activity of stopping people who are not reasonably suspected of any crime and documenting their personal information before, during, or after the interaction" (63). These arbitrary police stops have significant impacts for Black people's job prospects and future opportunities (Hudson, "Unborderable Blackness" 112n5). The disproportionate carding of Black Canadians is also why Maynard (2017) notes that the ability to walk freely in public is often taken for granted by white Canadians (89).

Fig. 14. “Young Gunner” still – Toppled over chess game, 2014. Copyright © Mark Valino. Courtesy of Shi Wisdom.

I read a scene in “Young Gunner,” where Black men and boys are playing chess until a fight breaks out and the already nearby undercover police swarm in with firearm in hand (fig. 14), as an allusion to complicated attempts to undermine attempts at democratic racism by delinking constructions of Black masculinity from their perceived inherent connection to criminality. This allegory operates in two ways. First, the chess game symbolizes the calculated efforts that Black men and boys must make to survive in under-served communities, like Parkdale, and gestures toward a recognition that some of those choices might, in fact, not be choices at all given their location within the confines of a democratically racist society. Secondly, the game doubles as a commitment to a politics of respectability that seeks to make Blackness more palatable to the dominant society. I read the toppling over of this chessboard, then, as a rejection of a respectability politics since it ultimately leaves the white supremacist status quo untouched.

Wisdom disrupts this white supremacist status quo through her belief that critical issues of Black community life are relevant to our entire Canadian population. By framing the narratives in "Young Gunner" as "not just a "Black issue" (Wisdom 2020), Wisdom illuminates the continued impact of democratic racism in Canada. In our interview, for example, she expressed an awareness that constructions of whiteness are not exempt from wider discussions about race and whiteness' links to power and societal privilege:

> Talking about Black issues (which is not a thing; it's everybody's issue but some people will like to pretend like it's only ours), talking about "Black issues" has been something that has always been a thing for me, from the beginning. Which is part of the reason why I've missed out on opportunities, or people will pass up on me because 'um, she might go off and say this, this, that about white people,' and it's like well, who else are we talking about here? It's always been a part of what I'm doing and I feel no ways about it. That will never, ever change… since I was a child, I've always noticed these things. This is always something that's been a thing for me. So, I don't think in my big, big age now, with the knowledge that I have, that's going to change. Because it's even more real to me now than it was when I first noticed it. (Wisdom 2020)

Wisdom's perspectives align with Walker's (1983) suggestion that Black community resistance may be bolstered by the support of non-Black people with the recognition that Black resistance struggles are their struggles too. Linking "Young Gunner" to the principle of art as a radical care ethic maintains an interconnected understanding of humanity that stretches community responsibilities of exercising care and combating anti-Black racism beyond the confines of Black communities and other racialized communities.

I link Wisdom's emphasis on the need for "Black issues" to be addressed by more than just Black people to the long history of Black feminist critiques of the white feminist exclusion of the experiences of Black women and non-binary people. Wisdom's perspectives, therefore, make an important intervention by extending this communal responsibility of care beyond feminists of colour through her indictment of white people more broadly for their refusal to take up issues of race and racism. A deeper interrogation of the possibilities for thinking relationally across socially constructed borders of race, class and sexuality might open up spaces for different kinds of multicultural relationships than those reliant on practices of democratic racism.

I am also interested in what other readings beyond critiques of Black community surveillance, violence, policing and grief Wisdom's work offers. At the end of the music video, an African proverb is displayed which states: "Until the lion has a historian, the hunter will always be the hero." I read the inclusion of this proverb as another indication of how the video's overall discourse is grounded in a wider African diasporic experience in Canada. This proverb suggests that the ideas portrayed throughout "Young Gunner" are far more complex than might initially be suggested. This proverb reminds us to be cautious about whose voice get centered as their perspectives have significant implications for how the overall story will be conveyed. "Young Gunner" consequently reassesses and challenges how Black presence is normatively registered in the Canadian public. Ongoing community practices of care that keep Black communities, like Eglinton West from which Wisdom hails, "thriving" make this reassessment possible.[10]

[10] I use the term thriving loosely to highlight the fact that Eglinton West, also known as Little Jamaica, is undergoing significant gentrification. These community shifts which also includes ongoing constructions for the extension of a Toronto public transit system, have facilitated a blatant neglect for existing Black residents and business owners in the area who have occupied and developed this space since the 1970s (Baptiste 2020; Samuel 2021; Stober 2020).

Decades prior to my own encounters with "Little Jamaica," which dates back to the 1990s, Eglinton West and its several community stores (barbershops and salons, West Indian grocery stores, and *Randy's* the infamous patty shop that closed its doors in 2022) functioned as a space of stories of Black Caribbean community struggle and triumph, where Jamaican immigrants, like my mother, would feel more at home by being surrounded by other people who looked and sounded like her. In addition to these establishments and intersecting life stories, the presence of individuals, like the man you would often see selling burned CDs and DVDs on the sidewalk, made "Little Jamaica" possible.

As Wisdom exclaimed in our interview, “That’s my guy!” joyfully sharing her experiences with the everyday people of Eglinton West:

> The man that’s selling his like DVDs and the guy that sells the juice, all the man deem, they’re all a part of it… There’s one darker skin, thinner man. And there’s one heavier set, shorter man who has light eyes. And you know he got hit by a car? Right there on the block. A guy spun out of control and hit him and buss up his leg. I hadn’t seen him in years and people are like, ‘oh mi did see seh him dead.’ I was like ‘oh my God! What happened to him?’ I was so sad because I love those guys man. They’re special people. I really think they’re special people. They’re like angels… And it’s always safe vibes and they always look out for me you know? Because there’s always other people that are there, you know what I mean? And we’re women, so you know how it goes. They’ll always look out for me. They’ll always come walk with me, ask me ‘so how yuh do? You waan some juice? You waan likkle DVD? You want likkle movie?’… And make sure I get there safe.” (2020)

Wisdom provides a fitting rereading of how Black masculinity operates in Toronto's public spaces as she names these Black men who frequent her neighbhourhood in ways that are contrary to the societal tendency to equate their being to criminality, instead describing them as “angels.” In stating that, “we’re women, so you know how it goes,” Wisdom indirectly references the gendered forms of violence that Black women and girls are often subject to. The volunteer efforts of these “angels” to ensure that she returns home safely demonstrates their willingness to protect Black women and girls from the dangers of the streets. I read their interventions as exemplary of the necessary community responses required to remind little Black girls that they are worthy of protection.

While some people might easily walk past these men while on their way to buy a Jamaican patty from Randy’s or jerk chicken from Raps as if they are invisible, it is important to recognize that to some they are, in fact, the unsung heroes that help build safe communities. It is this recognition of the important roles that Black men and boys play within communities, like Eglinton West (or Parkdale), that inform “Young Gunner.” It can be argued that the care Wisdom enacts through this song is in response to the care she herself has already received from the Black men and boys she dedicates this song to.

Wisdom’s important relationship to Eglinton West is also demonstrated in her music video for the song, “LoveSpeak.” This video was shot in her late grandfather’s barbershop and salon which doubles as a cultural site where Black community knowledges are exchanged and relationships are established while concretizing cultural identities (Alexander 2003; Wisdom 2020). Patrons could often be seen outside this barbershop/salon along Eglinton West (fig. 15), standing next to a smoking jerk pan emitting delicious fragrances of jerk chicken, much like those found on the streets of Jamaica.

The establishment of Little Jamaica ultimately reflects how Caribbean communities create their own diasporic versions of home. Since "LoveSpeak" captures a typical day in "Little Jamaica" from Wisdom's second-generation perspective, this music video also demonstrates the overlapping and shared place-making methods enacted by both first- and second-generation Canadians of Caribbean descent.

Fig. 15. "LoveSpeak" still – Shi Wisdom's family barbershop on 1754 Eglinton Avenue West, 2011. Copyright © David F. Mewa.

While "Young Gunner" is primarily geared toward Black men and boys and reflects Wisdom's passion for speaking out on issues faced by Black communities, the principle of arts as a radical care ethic also requires a consideration of the extent to which these realities impact Black Canadian women, girls, trans and nonbinary peoples. The very fact that Wisdom chose to write this song demonstrates that as a Black woman the systemic targeting of Black men and boys throughout the city noticeably impacts her. This impact is reflected in Wisdom's views concerning who "Young Gunner" is speaking to where she names "… mostly the young Black boys off of the strip that you know they're targeted in a different way than Black women when it comes to police... When you think about gang violence you're not ever really thinking too, too tough about Black women in it, you're mostly thinking about Black men in that type of

environment" (2020). In addition to acknowledging the differential treatment that Black men and women receive at the hands of the police, I connect her assumed sense of responsibility to create this song to the ways in which Black women and girls are socially groomed to be caretakers of Black communities regardless of whether or not their efforts are acknowledged and/or reciprocated:

> You know, you get to that age where you start to decide where you're trying to go, what person you're potentially trying to be. And I don't have any judgment for people who choose that life [of crime] because I don't know why they chose it. I know people that aren't necessarily horrible people but they felt like they didn't have an option or a choice. It depends. I try not to judge people's decisions in that regard because it could be many reasons why a person chooses to go down that route. The song is basically speaking to like, this is a choice that you can make but understand that when you make this decision, this is likely the direction that it's going to go. And sometimes even when you don't decide to go that route, because we're all looked at all literally the same, you may be looked at as that way anyways, but even worse for you if you're in it. And this is probably where you're going to end up, more than likely dead. Whether at the hands of the police, or you know, whoever you're fighting with. It's just the reality of the situation. It's for you to choose, but this is what it is. The reality is that. (2020)

While acknowledging that Wisdom's specific focus on Black men and boys in "Young Gunner" is important because of the underlying message she aims to share with them and while recognizing that Black men are overwhelmingly subject to community violence and are often victims of police brutality, the Black women's arts praxis I offer, however, facilitates a more nuanced, complex and capacious understanding of Black Canadian life.

My reading of "Young Gunner" in relation to the principle of art as a radical ethic of care, for example, critiques the societal tendency to prioritize or solely acknowledge male perspectives and experiences while masking the wider impact of community violence and loss. Desmond Cole (2020) notes the vast range of people targeted by the police which include not only Black people, but also "Indigenous people, sex workers, people in crisis, homeless people, poor people, queer, trans people, two-spirit and gender non-conforming people, and people living with disabilities, addictions, or mental health issues" (66). Although Wisdom's music video does include representations of Black trans men, the fact that Toronto activists and community members rallied against the violent arrest of Black and Indigenous two-spirited Trans woman, Moka Dawkins, shows that the negative impacts of policing extend far beyond the context of Black masculinity (Justice for Moka Dawkins 2020).

Since memory is heavily gendered (Ford-Smith 2011), I am interested in the capacity for the arts praxis I offer to operate in ways that not only acknowledge the choices that Black cis and trans boys and men make and their consequences, but also how Black nonbinary people, mothers, sisters, aunties, girlfriends, and lovers are subject to the same trauma regardless of the different ways their effects might translate. In other words, my principle of art as a radical care ethic seeks to register the ripple effects of community violence. By deploying a wake-work methodology, I draw from Christina Sharpe's method to highlight other nuances present in "Young Gunner," particularly the ways in which the role of women and other forms of Black experiences go undetected, are easily forgotten, or are deemphasized in relation to the experiences of Black men.

Wisdom moves toward the inclusion of an analysis of Black women's pain in a brief shift from her male-centered audience to Black mothers.

The lyrics "[d]on't cry for him mama…" suggest that because the deceased Black man is no longer here, he is in a safer place since "[t]hey cannot see his face now/They cannot run his plates now" (Wisdom and Nevon). These lyrics grimly indicate that those left behind need not mourn the physical absence of Black sons and brothers as they are no longer subject to a democratically racist country which constantly makes life unlivable for them.

My reading of "Young Gunner" through a radical care ethic and wake-work methodology goes further to acknowledge Robyn Maynard's demand that we recognize the value in all Black lives, extending the analysis of the impact of community violence beyond Black men and grieving mothers to include women like Regis Korchinski-Paquet (Maynard 2017, 14). Korchinski-Paquet was a Black and Indigenous woman who fell to her death from a 24th floor apartment in 2020 during her interaction with Toronto police while she was in mental distress (Maynard 2020). A wake-work methodology and radical care ethic must also attend to the loss of women, like Sofia Cook who was shot in her back while sitting in a car still strapped in her seatbelt in 1989 in Toronto. She was temporarily paralyzed (Bergman and O'Farrell 1989). Many others, including Chevranna Abdi, a Black transgender woman who died while in police custody in 2003 (Maynard 2017, 14), must also be named, grieved and memorialized.

My radical care ethic, thus, responds to the line in "Young Gunner" which references the normalcy of "seeing bloodstains on the block" by reminding us that it is Black women who clean up the blood when it does not rain (Wisdom and Nevon). Even if Black communities have access to remediation services, how might we register the gendered ways that Black communities navigate the lingering grief that persists in the wake of Black injury and death?

I ask this with an interest in how my reading of second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women's arts might allow us to pay closer attention to the unconventional strategies used by Black communities to grieve with the belief that these nuances might encourage more viable practices of community care. By centering the role of Black Caribbean Canadian women artists and their artwork, the principles I offer identify the extent to which the arts have always been integral for enacting care by being carefully attentive to Black life throughout Africa's diasporas.

In the following section of the chapter, I turn to Anique Jordan's self-portraits to continue conversations about how second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women's upbringing and constructions of home inform their artwork. *Ban' Yuh Belly* outlines a Black woman's perspective in response to living in the East Toronto neighbourhood of Malvern while offering continued gendered responses to Black community violence and systemic neglect.

Ban' Yuh Belly

Fig. 16. Zalucky Contemporary Gallery Installation View. *Ban' Yuh Belly*, 2019. Courtesy of Anique Jordan.

Anique Jordan's exhibit displays a series of black and white self-portraits with several archival objects captured alongside her (fig. 16). Whether these artifacts are in the form of a cloth resembling a KKK hood and robe or local newspaper clippings, this overall collection displays the wide-ranging impact that living in an anti-Black racist, patriarchal, and capitalist society has on Black Canadian women. The exhibit's title, *Ban' Yuh Belly* derives from a gender-specific Caribbean phrase originally used to caution women to gird their back while pregnant. It also means to hold onto something and/or to brace yourself for something to come (Jordan, "Ban' Yuh Belly"; Jordan and Pearson Clarke 2019). Much like what Wisdom does with sound, Jordan's work is an example of the Black geographic as her second-generation perspective negotiates relationships with both Canada and the Caribbean in new ways. Since the *Ban' Yuh Belly* title is grounded in a Caribbean tradition, this exhibit demonstrates mechanisms of cultural retention that are required to sustain Black life in the wider African diaspora. Thinking about why Black women of Caribbean descent might still need to brace themselves in preparation for something to come while situated in Canada further reveals the precariousness of Black life, extending Christina Sharpe's (2016) notion of the weather. *Ban' Yuh Belly* also contends with Katherine McKittrick's (2006) discussion about the extent to which visual knowledge constructs understandings about how Canada privileges whiteness, as in "white, not blackless, not black, not nonwhite, not native Canadian, but white" (96–97).

In addition, my reading of Jordan's photography borrows from the work of Tina Campt (2017), specifically her method of "listening to images" which recognizes photography as a method to affirm the visibility of Black life. Campt describes photography as a site of rupture and refusal which I argue can be identified through what Jordan's series invokes in the register of the visual.

In *Ban' Yuh Belly*, Jordan's self-portrait in profile with a slightly lowered gaze, along with her black and white striped t-shirt, alludes to the ethnographic photograph, the mug shot, and prison garb. Reading these photos as Jordan's active self-representation, however, moves beyond this visual representation of criminalization. Her averted gaze registers how Blackness gets positioned differently by challenging what Tina Campt describes as the "repressive genre of the mug shot" which includes a variation of identification photos like those in passports that archive and categorize criminals, mental patients, and colonial "Others" deemed deviant or pathological (25). These self-portraits also capture Jordan's autonomy as both artist and subject where she dictates the terms of our point of view. I read this alternate perspective as a photographic engagement in a politics of Black female spectatorship, which bell hooks (1992) describes as an oppositional gaze, in order to take seriously the power involved in looking. In thinking with Jordan's photographic art, I consider how anti-Black violence and grief, skewed media practices, public memory, and city planning inform her work and how her work affirms and reinforces Black Canadian visibility.

The alternative measures for Black life prompted by her photography signals a praxis for imagining constructions of Blackness otherwise and is, therefore, a reflection of wake work (Sharpe 113). With an interest in thinking through what ways a Black women's arts praxis might disrupt constructions of race that locate Blackness outside of the category of the human and, thus, facilitate an inability to register and remember Black life, my reading of Jordan's photography in relation to the principle of art as a radical care ethic extends the ways we collectively remember that also include victims of anti-Black violence. In addition to centering the victims of community and police violence in Toronto, my reading also incorporates Kevin Quashie's (2012) methodology.

Quashie's notion of the quiet which centers Black interiority allows my reading of Jordan's photography to further contend with the ripple effect of these overlapping forms of violence that are primarily experienced behind closed doors.

Anique Jordan describes her motivation for creating these self-portraits as being led by her desire to critique how public memory is cultivated by our local media:

> That was always something I've been interested in doing, which is to work with the archive that I collect. To remind the city of what we actually have already gone through because we allow the news cycle to be our memory. And as soon as it shifts, there's no more conversation about things that happened, you know? And especially when we're constantly as Canadians being told, "oh, we don't have the same experiences as African Americans," right? *Ban Yuh' Belly*, some of the pieces in it, is a bit of my own urgencies toward making undeniable what it is that we experience all the time… There are reasons to be mad. All the things that you experience in all the institutions, they're not figments of the imagination, they're real things and they keep happening. So here are a few things for us to remember and collectively know as part of the history of the city, because the city would rather that we forget it. (2020)

In other words, *Ban' Yuh Belly* grapples with the societal preference for Black erasure by reminding Black communities that their experiences are real and their rage in response to anti-Blackness in Canada is valid. bell hooks (1995) supports Jordan's validations by pinpointing the various ways Black rage is fueled by white supremacy while identifying rage as an appropriate response to injustice (26, 30). Jordan's work, therefore, displays how photography can be used as "an everyday strategy of affirmation and a confrontational practice of visibility" by reinforcing the experiences of Black Canadians (Campt 7).

I read Jordan's confrontational visual practice in ways that contest Black erasure while positing generative understandings of care practices that allow Black women and communities to collectively find new ways to hold onto and/or embrace each other in the wake of systemic anti-Black violence. The erasure of Black Canadian experiences has to do with how constructions of Blackness are rendered as both invisible and hyper-visible in Canada, as well as how whiteness dominates our national memory. By arguing that, "Canadian state institutions and official narratives attempt to render blackness outside of those same narratives, and simultaneously attempt to contain blackness through discourses of Canadian benevolence," Walcott (2003) identifies the conflicting positions of Black Canadians (44). Walcott's claims regarding the absented Black presence in Canada suggests that if the ongoing legacy of Black trauma that Jordan's work addresses were to be "officially" acknowledged, this recognition would ultimately destabilize normative understandings of the entire nation. This destabilization is, indeed, necessary to imagine, build and practice another kind of Canadianness.

Jordan's photo "Now" (2019), which shows her profile centered between two polarizing front pages from local newspapers (fig. 17), centers public responses to victims of gun violence in Toronto as a prime example of how Canadian national memory remains grounded in Black erasure. The first clipping from the *Toronto Star*, shows a grid of thirty-six photographs starting with the image of the white Canadian teenager Jane Creba,[11] while displaying the primarily Black lives lost during the 2005 "year of the gun" and asks whether or not the end of community violence is near. The second clipping displays a 2014 *NOW Magazine* cover which also contains a grid, this one is of elected officials and asks why the Toronto City Council is so white (Jordan, "Now").

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[11] Jane Creba was a fifteen-year-old white girl that was killed while shopping with her mother on Boxing Day in 2005. Her injuries were a result of her getting caught in the crossfire of two rivaling groups on Yonge Street in Toronto (A. Davis 23; Loriggio).

Fig. 17. Anique Jordan, "Now," *Ban' Yuh Belly*, 2019. Courtesy of Artist.

Using the principle of art as a radical care ethic, I position "Now" (2019) as an entry-point to consider how Black Caribbean Canadian women's art offers methods for how to continue surviving and thriving in the present and future while uncovering the various ways Black communities practice care-work. In addition to this photograph, the wider *Ban' Yuh Belly* exhibit offers this life-sustaining art by creating a counterarchive that rejects the limited Canadian memory circulating in the local news.

The circulating image of Jane Creba in the media following her murder in 2005 powerfully erased from public memory the several preceding images of Black youth who were also killed (Davis 2006, 23).

Jane Creba was a fifteen-year-old white girl who was killed while shopping with her mother on Boxing Day after getting caught in the crossfire of two rivaling groups on Yonge Street in Toronto (Davis 23; Loriggio 2020). Responses to the killing of two white Canadian girls in the 2018 Danforth mass shooting— eighteen-year-old Reese Fallon and ten-year-old Julianna Kozis—garnered similar outrage (Fox 2020). While it is not my intention to generate useless comparisons between traumas, I do think it is important to unpack the vast differences in Canadian societal responses to loss of life. I do this by questioning and challenging who gets to be remembered and why. This skewed memory is linked to dominant discourses in the media where journalists, editors, broadcasters, and news directors collectively solidify myths, symbols, and ideologies in which Black people are characterized as problems needing to be fixed, repressed or silenced (Henry and Tator 2005, 110). It is this projection of Black undesirability that also constructs Black people as disposable and, therefore, not worth remembering.

The first lines in the Toronto Star article in response to Creba's death are a telling example of Canadian society's problematic memory. They state, "… since Jane Creba died on Monday, people are asking the same questions: What will it take for enough to be enough?... There is a powerful sense among the residents of our city that this week is different" (Diebel 2005). My work responds to this article and asks, *different for whom?* Since Creba was the last of the over fifty other gun related homicides that year, why was her photograph positioned at the beginning of the composite image and not the end? Why did her death exacerbate the perceived crisis of gun violence, and not the death of the over thirty primarily Black and Brown male victims? Christina Sharpe's description of dysgraphia, which identifies how language in the media is implicated in circulating Black social, material, and psychic death, contextualizes this peculiar difference.

As Sharpe argues, "theorizing wake work requires a turn away from existing disciplinary solutions to blackness's ongoing abjection that extend the dysgraphia of the wake" and demands that we name North America's educational and carceral institutions as complicit in Black people's abjection from transatlantic slavery and its aftermaths (33). This dysgraphia is marked by repetition, mis-representation and an inability to register Black peoples' insistence on life in the wake of Black death. Sharpe's theory of dysgraphia allows me to critique how Creba's intersections of race and gender mark her as exemplary and more worth of compassion and care than not only Black and Brown men, but Black women as well.

"[T]his week is different" as quoted in the article disappears Muluka Hassan-Ali, Champagne Lewis and Livvette Miller who were the Black women sharing space on the Star's front page (Diebel). The limited extension of compassion facilitated by this "dysgraphia of disaster" is shown in the overwhelming percentage of the media's focus on Creba who appeared 165 times during my newspaper search on OMNI for articles written in 2005, whereas Hassan-Ali, Miller and Lewis collectively appear just 90 times. In addition to the Black women victims who are made to disappear, the article further disregards the ongoing practices of care and attempts for the living to keep on keeping on in response to trauma. To revisit my earlier question regarding the gendered ways that Black communities navigate lingering grief, I ask what of the Black women and girls who hold their breath or bite their inner cheek in an attempt to fight back tears while passing the location where their loved one was murdered? When we see traces of a withered wreath or dead flowers still wrapped in cellophane on the roadside, I am interested in the ways Black women artists might counter the media's dysgraphia in ways that might compel us to take a moment to consider the amount of courage it would take for someone to put those flowers there.

In espousing a radical care ethic as foundational to a Black women's arts praxis, my research understands care as a shared responsibility, thus, making room to account for all of these varied perspectives and implications. It is also worth noting that Jordan's photograph is labeled "Now" despite referencing the past, highlighting Black people's nuanced and complex relationships to the past and present. This blurred temporality, thus, makes it difficult to concretely imagine the "end" questioned by the Toronto Star article, as the aftermath of this trauma continues to be felt.

Seven years prior to conducting this fieldwork, Jordan and I crossed paths for the first time at the funeral of our dear friend Masud Khalif who was a victim of community violence. This encounter further underscores the ways in which her art and this dissertation are uniquely interconnected by the continued ripple effects of Black loss. It is because of these ongoing experiences of grief and rage that Jordan chooses to center herself as the subject. She explains why it had to be her in an effort to avoid (re)injuring someone else during her creation process:

> I chose to put myself in the images because I actually thought that the content was so violent and so painful that I couldn't ask somebody else to participate in the remembering and the mounting of the text archive. Most of these things aren't old… for the most part they're in the 2000s. I was so worried. I felt, "Oh my God, this is so violent, so harmful, you know? Is this even a good idea for me to do this?" But I was like, "These things are recent, what are you talking about?" But I said to myself, I am doing that; that I need to be the person who is in it. Not ask somebody else to put their body there. (Jordan 2020)

Whether positioned as the subject or experiencing these images from the standpoint of a Black community member visiting the gallery, confronting some form of injury is unavoidable as the "weather" (Sharpe 2017) in "the afterlife of slavery" (Hartman 2007) is always already subjecting Black peoples to injuries of all kinds.

Jordan's efforts, however, demonstrate how the Black women artists I work with implement a kind of care ethic that gestures toward more generative ways of confronting and coping with the reality of everyday anti-Black violence and death.[12] I understand Jordan's willingness to subject herself to potential (re)injury during the process of creating *Ban' Yuh Belly* as a reflection of Kevin Quashie's claim regarding Black women's inability to inhabit the right of being "nothing to anyone but self" (70). Coming to terms with the added risks behind this work, therefore, necessitates an acknowledgement of the fact that creating artwork that is centered around triggering themes, such as systemic violence and Black death in Canada, is no easy feat.

Jordan also discusses having prior involvement with community-based programming where she would regularly interact with youth and co-workers who had close ties with people who were incarcerated and/or murdered which, in part, informs *Ban' Yuh Belly*. In addition to these overlapping influences, she elaborates on the emotional toll that creating this artwork had on her:

> I grew up being part of a lot of youth, and then later on leading a lot of youth programs. I've seen so many of the young people that I've worked with and so many of my friends who I grew up with be murdered, be incarcerated, all kinds of stuff. So much threats of violence. And for me personally, I struggle with grieving. It comes to a point where there hasn't been a moment of pause with the grief that it consumes me. And it requires new words to cope with. In doing that project, a lot of it was really hard for me. And my friend just died after that. It's just so much. (Jordan 2020)

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[12] In addition to the participating artists for this dissertation, gestures toward imagining Blackness otherwise are exemplified through the artwork of by Alexis Pauline Gumbs, Charlotte Henay, NJ Katshunga, Belinda Kazeem-Kaminski, Juliane Okot Bitek, Ebony Patterson, Natalie Wood, and many many more.

It is for these reasons why my Black women's arts praxis emphasizes the importance of self-care, preservation, and prioritization or what Quashie names as "being for self" which is described as an essential requirement to experience the fullness of one's humanity (70).

My principle of art as self-love challenges the assumed societal responsibility to others that Black women inhabit by reminding us of Black women's need to put themselves first due to the unlikelihood that anyone else will. The principles of art as a radical care ethic and art as self-love together facilitate my ability to read Black women's artwork in ways that recognize those moments in Black women artists' creative processes where they might have to pause, take a deep breath, cry, seek therapy, or distract themselves by watching TV in an effort to prioritize the preservation of their mental health. Jordan's image, "These Times," (2019) where she lays exhaustingly in bed while dressed in yard/house clothes with her back turned to the camera lens, demonstrates the physical impact caused by the realities of anti-Black racist induced trauma.

The intimate perspective offered by "These Times" provides a visual response to Quashie's question about writing's capacity to represent race and identity via the interior as this image portrays a Black woman's experience that the public is not usually privy to (27). Jordan mentions multiple occasions where white people inquired about the inclusion of this image further underscoring that her work is created specifically for Black people (2020). The very fact that some people had to inquire about "These Times," whereas my own initial encounter with this image evoked an immediate sense of familiarity raises question about the white gaze. Although Jordan states that, "everyone else is invited," she importantly expresses that those outside of Black communities ought to "do 'the work' and put in the effort to find meaning in it" (2020).

Part of this effort might consider the extent to which some people might experience a keen familiarity with Jordan's posture in "These Times" as it resonates with the stories of Black women who find it difficult to get out of bed in the morning. Many Black women admit to oversleeping without feeling rested, which further illuminates how the intersections of race, class, gender and sexuality make Black women more susceptible to symptoms of depression (Beauboeuf-Lafontant 2007; Schreiber et al. 2000, 40–41; Williams et al. 2017, 1139). These issues further underscore the importance of cultivating self-love/care practices as discussed in chapter one to mitigate the deplorable effects that living in an anti-Black society continue to have on Black women's mental and physical health. Part of 'doing the work' would also consider the extent to which one's societal privilege ultimately makes unfamiliar a photographic scene like "These Times." It is because of this problematic engagement with Jordan's work that I have strategically chosen not to include this image in my dissertation in the hope that I might mitigate and challenge how the (white) public consumes Black artwork and by extension Black grief.

Jordan challenges this consuming gaze, and whiteness more broadly, in other photographs from *Ban' Yuh Belly*, such as, "Malvern" (2019). Here, Jordan positions herself on the right side of the frame while her profile is surrounded by several pages from a 1969 report released by the Ontario Housing Commission in partnership with the Canadian Government (fig. 18). I read "Malvern" as a depiction of the spatialization of difference to signify how identities occupy space. The spatialization of difference signals the ways in which intersections, such as race, gender, class and sexuality are geographically experienced and inform how community infrastructure is both implemented and eradicated (McKittrick, 2002 28).

Similar to Parkdale, Malvern is considered a priority neighbourhood, one based in Scarborough and home to primarily multi-ethnic, racialized, refugee, and working-class populations who are alienated (Basu 2019).

The Ontario Housing Commission report fittingly corresponds with Jordan's earlier image, "Now" (2019), since Toronto City Council continues to be primarily white ("Members of Council").

Fig. 18. Anique Jordan, "Malvern," *Ban' Yuh Belly*, 2019. Courtesy of Artist.

Whether in 1969 or 2022, community development efforts done under budgets approved by Council continue to significantly impact Black Torontonians and Indigenous populations in unsatisfactory ways. The late 1960s report was collectively produced by city planners, engineers, surveyors, architects, and sociologists. Their introduction mentioned having "acquired" land for the purposes of creating a "balanced" community to solve existing urban development issues (Community Development Consultants Ltd. 1969). While deploying a Black feminist and womanist lens through my encounter with this document, I was compelled to question who this land was acquired from. The fact that the word "indigenous" only appears in relation to their analysis of the land's vegetation is a telling example of the extent to which the power held within governmental bodies are predicated on the erasure of Indigenous peoples. These government agencies remain complicit in sustaining the legacies of settler-colonialism (Community Development Consultants Ltd. 5).

It is also worth discussing the fact that this report acknowledges how isolated Malvern is from the central downtown Toronto core. These community development consultants specified that adequate transportation would be essential for this neighbourhood pending family car ownership and "a high incidence of working wives" (Community Development Consultants Ltd. 9). Outside of the gendered assumptions that inform this text, assumptions which blatantly rely on patriarchal constructions of womanhood that maintain a desire for (white) women to stay at home, it is important to also critique the fact that Malvern continues to face transportation challenges. This ongoing neglect can be seen in the Toronto Transportation Commission's (TTC) recommendation for the 2023 shut down of the Scarborough RT rather than replacing it with a rapid transit system as was initially proposed (Fox 2021).[13]

[13] The Scarborough RT is the main avenue of transportation connecting the East end of the city to the downtown core.

This unreliable form of transportation will have damaging repercussions for the predominately Black and other racialized people who are increasingly forced to live east of the segregated city of Toronto (Basu 2019; Vincent 2018).

I read Jordan's stance and averted gaze in "Malvern," therefore, as her looking toward another horizon, one that is grounded in a Black feminist futurity. Tina Campt defines a Black feminist futurity as "a performance of a future that hasn't yet happened but must… It's a politics of pre-figuration that involves living the future now —as imperative rather than subjunctive— as a striving for the future you want to see, right now, in the present" (17). Andrea Davis (2022) locates Campt's ideas within a specifically Canadian context and adds that "the call for a future now is a reflection of a desire to live as one might simply choose to be, with an understanding of self that has meaning for our shared conditions in the evolving present" (34). Despite the Ontario Housing Commission report's claims to "designate what should be built, where, when and for whom" (Community Development Consultants Ltd. 25), I read Jordan's intervention in "Malvern" as a looking toward a possibility where Black Canadian women and communities strategically plan their own viable neighborhoods. These future spaces will be ones where Black women and non-binary people are placed at the center of conversations about the development of community networks of safety which operate outside of policing mechanisms; where Black people can have access to housing, jobs, food, and healthcare rather than continue to be systematically underserved as initiated by the plan that surrounds Jordan in this photograph. Reading Jordan's position as future-oriented, thus, suggests that there are alternative viewpoints concerning Malvern that ought to be prioritized instead.

Some of these alternative perspectives are outlined in the wider discourses surrounding Black Canadian womanhood that Jordan' work explores. Jordan explains in our interview, for example, that:

> There's nothing that I can do that isn't making some commentary on Black womanhood because it's made by a Black woman… I am deeply interested in investigations surrounding the ways that I've grown up, the communities around me, the context that I live in… it comes out in all of the work that I make.
>
> For the most part I primarily work with women as the central figure in most of my work. If it's image-based, and if it's not a self-portrait, it's usually a woman that's at the center of it. Or, the story is surrounding the life of a woman. (2020)

Jordan's relationship to Malvern and her wider lived-experiences outlined in *Ban' Yuh Belly,* thus, demonstrate the extent to which Black women navigate the patriarchal, racist, capitalist aspects of Canadian life. Not only do these self-portraits outline Black Canadian women's relationships to the grief and trauma associated with community violence, but *Ban' Yuh Belly* reorients the confines of public memory while encouraging Black women to valorize mental wellness, cultivate joy, and live life according to their own standards.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued that Wisdom and Jordan demonstrate the principle of radical care by offering creative possibilities for rendering Black life in the present and future. Shi Wisdom's song "Young Gunner" (2014) highlights the realities concerning Black Canadian men and boys' subjection to police surveillance, community violence and the wider systemic disregard for Black lives.

Anique Jordan places herself at the center of *Ban' Yuh Belly* (2019) and uses photography to show how similar issues regarding community violence and a lack of adequate governmental support personally impact her and Black Canadian women more broadly. My reading of their artwork is cognizant of how Black women go unnoticed or disappear in relation to the Black masculine centered discourses of community violence and resists these silences by joining these artists' initiatives to honour and remember the dead, thus, practicing what Christina Sharpe describes as wake work. Sharpe states, "[a]s we go about wake work, we must think through containment, regulation, punishment, capture, and captivity and the ways the manifold representations of blackness become the symbol, par excellence, for the less-than-human being condemned to death" (21). The music and photography discussed in this chapter refuse this condemnation by offering new examples for how Black communities might survive the weathering of transatlantic slavery's afterlife.

CHAPTER THREE - ART AS SELF LOVE: *"LOUD"* REPRESENTATIONS OF SECOND-GENERATION *BLACK* CARIBBEAN CANADIAN *QUEER* LIFE THROUGH MUSIC AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Brianna Roye's photography and Kamilah Apong's music shed light on the inextricable link between constructions of Blackness and queer identities. I read their artwork in relation to the principle of art as self-love, I propose in this dissertation, to critique the societal tendency to exclude queer sexualities from understandings of Black Caribbean Canadian life. While using Alice Walker's (1983) definition of womanism as an entry-point into the discussions raised in the dissertation, I depart in this chapter from Walker's reliance on gender binaries by underscoring the various ways that Black Caribbean Canadian queer life demand broader and more fluid understandings of gender and sexuality. My readings of the photography and music I explore in this chapter are informed by Alison Donnell's (2021) notion of creolized sexualities, specifically her understanding of the Caribbean as a "creolized place that undoes the usefulness of thinking about identities in terms of origins, binaries, guaranteed lineages, and culturally discreet groupings" (1). Donnell's theorization of creolized sexualities is fitting for my readings of second-generation Black Caribbean women's art in ways that might operate beyond the confines of gendered binaries.

Part of what makes such unfixed ways of being possible, Emilio Amideo (2021) argues further, has to do with the sexual fluidity and non-linear temporality made possible through understandings of the role of water and the sea in the Caribbean and wider African diaspora. In other words, the sea and water are both representative of the African diaspora and suggestive of its sexual fluidity.

Amideo argues that the ocean/sea became a container for the collective memories of the Black diaspora via the Middle Passage, while the water itself "expresses the possibility of rethinking sexuality and identity as fluid, as a process" (3). I draw on Amideo's theory of sexual fluidity to offer more nuanced understandings of Black Caribbean Canadian queer life. This chapter, thus, contends with existing limitations of my initial turn to Alice Walker's understanding of womanism by reading the creative work of Brianna Roye and Kamilah Apong in more complex ways that rupture narrow understandings of Black identities through second-generation perspectives.

Roye's ongoing photography series, *Out of Many, One People*, captures Black queer and trans people of Caribbean descent living in Canada. Her second-generation Jamaican roots are reflected in the series' title, which borrows from the Jamaican national motto as reflected on the coat of arms. I use the principle of art as self-love to reflect on Roye's admission in our interviews that Black queer communities in both Canada and the Caribbean are "so hard to find" (Roye 2020). My analysis of how Roye's photography attends to the visibility of Black queer life in Canada and the Caribbean relies on Tina Campt's (2017) assertion of how images construct Black diasporic memory while operating in the "generative space of the counterintuitive" (6). With an emphasis on love in all its forms, Roye's work challenges the wider power constraints that silence and push Black queer life in Canada and the Caribbean to the margins. Roye's photographs are, thus, instructive for critiquing narratives about Black Canadian and Caribbean queer in/visibility by problematizing how the Caribbean diaspora in Toronto and the Caribbean more broadly are habitually experienced.

Similarly, Apong's music made with her band *Tush* is grounded in the Black queer genres of disco and house. Their song, "To Darnelladon (and Beyond)," is an Afrofuturist demonstration of Apong's intentional commitment to adhere to these genres both sonically and aesthetically. In this chapter, I analyze her work with *Tush* to highlight how their music rereads mainstream disco performances by (re)centering Black queer artistic cultural production, critiquing normative body politics, and offering wider possibilities for Black women's representations through a second-generation Caribbean Canadian queer perspective. Borrowing from Audre Lorde's (1984) concept of the erotic, I argue that Apong's sound, aesthetic, and wider approach to her own intersections through the principle of art as self-love demonstrate how she remains true to her whole self in ways that might also encourage others to do the same. In addition to offering methods for how to embrace the erotic and life fully and freely as a Black queer woman, my reading of her music understands her practice of chanting and repetition as a method to dismantle structures of white supremacy.

This chapter applies my principle of art as self-love to Roye's photography and Apong's music specifically to shift understandings of Canadian and Caribbean geographies by emphasizing the fact that Black queer and trans communities have always been present in these spaces and places. The title of this chapter borrows in part from Roye's insistence on the importance for Black queer people to "exist loudly," emphasizing the fact that if one would only take the time to listen, one might come to recognize these ever-present Black queer realities (2020). In *The Sonic Color Line* (2016), Jennifer Stoever correctly argues that aural practices are deeply linked to questions of race and racialization: "sounds linked to racialized bodies—such as music and the ambient sounds of everyday living" are codified "as 'noise,' sound's loud and unruly 'Other'" (12).

In other words, as Andrea Davis (2022) notes, "while whiteness is constructed as both invisible and inaudible, racialized bodies are always constructed as hypervisible and loud" (142).[14] In this chapter, I am seeking, therefore, to register the ways in which second-generation Caribbean Canadian artists reclaim and reframe ideas about Blackness as "noise" by centering the "loud" Black queer body as a public and unapologetic expression of Black queer life to critique the normative ways that the Toronto village is constructed as a predominately white space, as well as challenge the rendering of the Caribbean as largely homophopic (Anderson and MacLeod 2020; Haritaworn et al. 2018; Roye 2020). I read this idea of loudness as visibility alongside Kevin Quashie's (2012) notion of quiet as an examination of Black interiority, and alongside the idea of stillness as self-reflection.

Out of Many, One People

There's so many of us. We exist. Let's exist loudly – Brianna Roye

Brianna Roye's photography series, *Out of Many, One People*, uses her second-generation Canadian perspective to capture 2SLGBTQ+ peoples of Caribbean descent. Her title borrows from the Jamaican national motto that is supposedly grounded in a wider sense of racial, cultural, ethnic, and class unity. Roye's *Out of Many, One People* series, however, expands the functionality of this motto as a critique of who often gets left out of such all-encompassing catch phrases by calling into question the perpetuation of heteronormative nationalist rhetoric. This "elitist Jamaican motto" (Cooper 2012, 387) was part of a post-independence project to consolidate a creole and multiracial society and foster a sense of belonging for a majority Black population.

[14] Further discussions on the in/audibility of Black presence in Canada are reflected in Ola Mohamed's conference preceding, "'So Lit I got a Noise Complaint': Anti-Black Regulation of Space through Municipal Noise By-Laws in the GTA" from York University's Strategies of Critique XXXII in 2018, as well as, her forthcoming work *The Black Nowhere: The Social and Cultural Politics of Listening.*

This defining moment instead failed to change existing structural, institutional and ideological expectations regarding growth, "development" and "progress," and inequitable power relations remain endemic in Jamaica (Thomas 2004, 5). Deborah A. Thomas (2004) further names this nationalist project as being rooted in a politics of respectability, which facilitates a particular selection of cultural practices while excluding others. She states, "[r]espectability, here, is a value complex emphasizing the cultivation of education, thrift, industry, self-sufficiency via land ownership, moderate Christian living, community uplift, the constitution of family through legal marriage and related gendered expectations, and leadership by the educated middle classes" (Thomas 5-6). I read Roye's series, therefore, as a critique of Jamaica's reliance on respectability politics and suggest that her photographs rethink and redefine notions of Jamaicanness. Her images also engage in a broader transnational dialogue that queers understandings of the wider Caribbean region and Canada. I am specifically interested in how *Out of Many, One People* disrupts Canadian and Caribbean attempts of concealment framed in a discourse of respectability by showcasing how Black queer and trans communities of Caribbean descent "exist loudly"; that is, the ways in which they assert their unmistakable presence and humanity.

In the photograph, "Cassandra and Tee" (fig. 19), the shared intimacy between the subjects directly challenges the wider societal erasure of Black Caribbean Canadian queer presence. The way the couple's interconnected bodies are positioned while they are sitting upright in bed compels the recognition of the love and care exchanged between them. By channeling the viewer's gaze in ways that center the intimacy and interiority of Black Caribbean Canadian queer life, the photo operates outside of the photographer's gaze. This intimate and warm moment is expressed through the careful placements of the lovers' hands.

Both of Cassandra's hands clasp Tee's left foot and ankle while their heads gently rest on each other with their eyes closed.[15] Tee's tattoo sleeved left arm also rests on Cassandra's shin which overlaps one of Tee's legs that straddle her.

Fig. 19. Photograph of Cassandra and Tee. *Out of Many, One People*, 2019. Courtesy of Brianna Roye.

As a representation of the interior experiences of Black Canadian 2SLGBTQ+ communities of Caribbean descent, the portrayal of this tender exchange between Cassandra and Tee complicates ideas about Blackness as loudness.

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[15] One might even note the olive green durag that Tee wears which further underscores this image as one that captures the interiority of Black queer life. While some might wear durags in similar ways as a bonnet to protect Black hairstyles while asleep, it can also be sported as a fashion statement as they often are worn outside of the home. It is, however, worth noting the gendered ways that a bonnet vs. a durag is read in public space as demonstrated in the social media backlash that the rapper, Plies, recently received after publicly critiquing Black women for wearing bonnets in public (Bombalier 2021; Decker 2021).

On the one hand, the overt and public expression of Black queer love conforms to Roye's desire to center Black queer life unapologetically in the Caribbean and its diasporas. On the other hand, however, the photograph's representation of Black interiority also centers the quiet, private spaces of Black love. Kevin Quashie's (2012) description of the quiet, which signifies a rejection of the singular framing of Black experiences through a lens of resistance, is, therefore, also useful for an analysis of Roye's portrayal of the interiority of Black Caribbean Canadian life. In a critique of the limited "common frameworks for thinking about blackness," Quashie disregards the inclination to equate Blackness solely with resistance that consequently renders other ways of Black being illegible (4). In the same way, Roye offers multiple frameworks for understanding Black queer life by moving in between registers of the loud and quiet.

While Roye's "loud" intentions directly respond to anti-Black and heteronormative tendencies expressed in Canada and the Caribbean, her simultaneous gesture toward the routine everyday/mundane experiences of Black queer and trans life is nevertheless quiet with its focus on the interior. Reading Quashie's concept in relation to Roye's photograph foregrounds the tenderness that she aims to capture in this series: "I try to photograph people in more tender situations… sometimes a head on the shoulder, holding hands, things that show gentleness, intimacy… Because we're not always allowed that space to be tender" (Roye 2020). Without seeking societal permission of any kind, this beautifully captured moment of intimacy illustrates the interior lens that Quashie theorizes and serves as an "invitation to imagine an inner life of the broadest terrain" (8). This broad terrain is precisely where the imagination of Black Caribbean Canadian queer and trans communities are located as they dream, aspire and create various iterations of the freedom, safety and tenderness necessary to make their lives more livable.

These imagined and constructed quiet moments are bolstered though what the contrasting items in this photograph convey. By this I am referring to the juxtaposition between the bedspread, the surrounding bedroom furniture, and the artwork on the wall. The patterned bedspread seems out of place on the sleek modern-styled bed, as if it were from a different era. Meanwhile, the carefully selected artwork behind Cassandra and Tee cannot necessarily be connected to any specific time period. This blurred sense of temporality connects to my principle of art as embodied history, which I take up in greater detail in chapter four in order to underscore the ways in which the ongoing legacies of chattel slavery are experienced by descendants of enslaved Africans living in diaspora.

Emilio Amideo's (2021) ideas about non-linear temporality are also fitting for my analysis of this photograph as he specifically outlines the implications of linear and/or "straight time" for Black women and Black queer people: Being queer in a straight time (or for that matter being Black in a racist setting) necessarily means not only to be out of time but also to be out of place. It means, in short, to become unintelligible in the progressive linear narrative that forms the basis of Western epistemology. (8) I am interested in how the items around Cassandra and Tee might offer a sense of what it means to be queer in straight time in order to counter the anti-Black temporal logics that render the lovers unintelligible in both Canadian and Caribbean contexts. For example, is it possible that the gold and burgundy patterned bedspread was passed down from a prior generation, suggesting the always already present of Black queer desire? Linking this work to conversations in the next chapter on Sandra Brewster's "Heirloom" (2017) installation, suggests there are other kinds of inheritances second-generation Caribbean Canadians might come to utilize. That Cassandra's full burgundy outfit compliments the fabric of the bedspread further indicates that this bed linen has significance.

I also read the artwork behind Cassandra and Tee as a visual representation of Amideo's idea of what it means to be queer in straight time. The interwoven, curved and waved lines of the wall art invoke the waves and currents of the sea, symbolizing Caribbean sexual fluidities.

Roye's photography thus documents Black Caribbean Canadian queer histories and contemporary realities that actively refuse to allow Black queer and trans experiences to go under-acknowledged and ultimately be forgotten. Following Afua Cooper's (2000) note of the importance of reconstructing histories about Black Canadian women to ensure they and their stories do not become "victims of amnesia" (39), I read *Out of Many, One People* as tangible proof of Black Caribbean Canadian queer histories, contesting the ways in which Black queer people in Canada are rendered unseen and forgotten. The selected photographs by Roye discussed throughout this chapter make visible Black queer representation by providing glimpses into contemporary Black life in Canada while illuminating the role that second-generation Black Canadian women's photography plays in maintaining Black queer and trans visibility. OmiSoore Dryden (2018) uses the lens of 2SLGBTQ+ activism in Canada to engage in a similar refusal of Black queer erasure by underscoring the fact that Black queer and trans lives have always existed in Canada despite their rendered positions of "elsewhereness" (63). This rearticulation of Black Caribbean Canadian life imagines Black queer "futures beyond displacement and dispossession" (Haritaworn et al. 5) while reading Black queerness as ever-present in both Canada and the wider Caribbean (Anderson and MacLeod 2020).

Roye's overall showcasing of queer and trans identifying people of Caribbean descent in Canada challenges the normative centering of the white gay male experience. This centering of whiteness influences how queer space is experienced throughout the city of Toronto.

Haritaworn et al. (2018) critique the privileging of whiteness within the Canadian landscape by noting how the Toronto Village is primarily constructed as a white gay space (10). Regardless of Toronto being highly celebrated as "one of the world's queer of colour capitals" (Haritaworn et al. 3), ongoing use of city space reveals underlying anti-Black racist conditions that permit displacement, policing, and gentrification in ways that render Black queer and trans lives disposable (Haritaworn et al. 12–13). Community responses that challenge the Canadian societal notion of Black queer disposability can be identified through the establishment of events, such as Blockorama. This full day party, specifically celebrating Blackness as a part of (and/or adjacent to) the Pride festival, exemplifies the relationship between Black 2SLGBTQ+ people in Toronto and multilayered community struggles and advocacy. Blockorama comes out of a strictly Caribbean tradition by way of Trinidad,[16] and brings carnival vibes to Toronto streets with DJs and performances to "… create space for black queers in the city to find ways to connect what often gets disconnected" (Bain 2016, 88). This disconnection refers to the ways in which Black queer identities get dissolved in dominant white queer visibility and heteronormative constructions of Black Caribbean communities (Bain 88).

Roye notes this societal masking of Black Canadian queer experiences by discussing how heteronormative values in Caribbean households have impacted her own life and approach to her photography:

> When it comes to photographing queer Caribbean people, we're so used to being kind of closeted in a way. Even if we're open or out in the city... It's outside of our own personal communities.

[16] While spearheaded by Trinidadian lesbian, activist, feminist, and educator, Jamea Zuberi, other group members from Blackness Yes, such as, Angela Robertson, Douglas Stewart, Junior David Harrison, Camille Orridge and Courtnay McFarlane were also instrumental in making Blockorama possible (Bain; Lord and Zuberi).

> So, it's like you're out when you're downtown, but you're closeted when you get home. So, I find that this kind of project is kind of born out of that. There's so many of us, and we're finally able to kind of feel more open and more free. (2020)

Roye's experience demonstrates a separation between "Blackness" and "queerness" in ways that ostracize Black queer and trans people from their surrounding environments. At the same time, the photograph of Cassandra and Tee demonstrates at home possibilities of being "out" and "open," further highlighting *Out of Many, One People's* complex renderings of how Black Canadian queer visibility operates in place and space.

There, however, still remains a tension between Roye's need to "loudly" bring visibility to aspects of Black queer life that are often pushed to the margins and her "quiet" normalization of Black queerness and transness through her collection of photographs (2020). Roye's art, thus, mirrors the need within a self-reclaiming politic to define Black life according to one's own terms. This politics of self-reclamation coincides with the principle of art as self-love since *Out of Many, One People* recognizes, affirms, and celebrates Black queer and trans lives and is largely informed by Roye's own lived-experiences. This politics of self-reclamation, in conjunction with my principle of art as self-love, captures the various complex readings of Roye's photographs and is thus central for this chapter's acknowledgement of the "loud" radical reverberations of Blackness that challenge heteronormative white supremacy while attending to the ordinary quiet convergences of being Black, queer, trans, Caribbean and Canadian.

Examples of "existing loudly" in a Canadian context that Roye promotes can be identified in ongoing practices, such as, taking up space in Black communities (Dryden 2018, 64).

These intentional practices of spatial occupation are in response to the homo/ trans / bi-phobia that is rife within Black Canadian communities and underscore the reasons why the volunteer collective of DJs, artists, community organizers, healthcare practitioners and activists that comprise Blackness Yes! importantly refuse the "dichotomous split between blackness and sexuality" (Bain 88). Out of Many, One People, therefore, bolsters the challenge of the societal separation between "Blackness" and queer identities not only in a Canadian context, but also in the Caribbean by depicting how these intersections are seamlessly experienced in the everyday lives of the people Roye captures. Her reference to "being kind of closeted" importantly acknowledges both the ways in which Black Caribbean queer and trans peoples are often denied safe, welcoming and healthy family dynamics, and the ways in which they create their own spaces of safety that exist outside of the heteronormative standards of Caribbean family life.

"Out of Many, One People": Queering the Caribbean and Canada

Roye's representation of Black queer life in specifically Canadian contexts, supports and extends the interventions made by scholars who critique the stifling im/possibilities for queer and trans being that are projected onto the Caribbean (Anderson and MacLeod 2020; Attai 2017; Donnell 2022; Ghisyawan 2016; Murray 2012; Nixon 2020; Walcott 2016). Alison Donnell (2022) astutely asks, "[w]hat does it mean to talk about the Caribbean as a place where heteronormativity is undone, as a constitutively queer place?" (1). By framing the Caribbean as always already queer through this question, and as a creolized space that undoes binaries of all forms, Donnell contributes to earlier scholarly discourses about normative constructions of the Caribbean as overtly homophobic while disregarding how queer and trans people have always resisted and carved out spaces to thrive.

This critique has been collectively discussed in Moji Anderson and Erin C. MacLeod's (2020) edited collection, *Beyond Homophobia: Centering LGBTQ Experiences in the Anglophone Caribbean*, where Nikoli Attai et al. (2020), for example, openly reject the portrayal of the Caribbean as "homogeneously homophobic" and share how same sex-loving and gender-nonconforming people chart their own lives and identities (22).

To clarify the resulting implications of this normative misreading about queer Caribbean life, Attai et al. (2020) use Jamaica to highlight the two-fold ways in which the queer body operates: Either as "dying in Jamaica (and/or dying to leave Jamaica by any means necessary) or thriving in the diaspora (in particular Global North refugee havens such as Canada and the Netherlands" (20). The establishment of Jamaica's Gay Freedom Movement and its history of gay rights activism that stretches back to the 1970s during the post-independence period, however, indicates that more nuanced understandings of Black queer Caribbean life must be acknowledged (Chin 2019). Contemporary organizations such as J-Flag and Transwave Jamaica, book clubs like Rebel Women Lit, and Roye's ongoing photography use Jamaican perspectives to posit alternative viewpoints of Black queer and trans Caribbean life.

Rinaldo Walcott (2020) similarly critiques narrow framings about Black Caribbean queer life by describing the fact that such "outsized homophobia" is fueled by a wider institutional exportation of Western rights (236). In addition to these Western rights-based conceits that Walcott mentions, David A. B. Murray (2012) outlines the key role that neoliberal economies played in informing discourses about queerness in the Caribbean by noting that it was not a coincidence that debates concerning "homosexuality" in Barbados were raised precisely when the island was undergoing major socioeconomic challenges that were defined through heteronormative and patriarchal lenses (9).

It is also imperative that we highlight the role that Canada has specifically played in the stereotypical depiction of the Caribbean as dangerous for queer people as noted in Nikoli Attai's (2017) discussion of "Canada's imperialistic domination" of queer organizing in the Caribbean (100-101). Due to the ways in which the legacies of slavery and colonialism continue to inform the limited and limiting representations of Black queer Caribbean life, I position Brianna Roye's photography in this chapter as a direct response to Colin Robinson's (2020) question about what can be done to counter global mis/representations of queer life in the Caribbean which are "killing our young people's ability to imagine a future?" (231).

The interventions that Roye makes which are applicable to the Caribbean are firstly shown through her use of the series, *Out of Many, One People,* to grapple with her own personal relationship to her Jamaican heritage:

> For me, my work, photographing queer Caribbean people has been almost like my personal way of reconnecting with my culture in a different way that's separate from my family. So, [it's] my kind of navigating queerness in a Caribbean context, a Jamaican context. That's kind of reaffirming that for me. COVID kind of messed things up. I was supposed to go back to Jamaica for a little bit, delve into that further, doing your own kind of self-discovery without your family's guidance. And I think that's really important for us first generation/second-generation. To just like, go back to your own roots on your own. Because that path of self-discovery is a little bit different…This year was supposed to be my time going back with adult-eyes, because everything is always different as a kid vs. adult, you know? But COVID said, no. (2020)

Although Roye's intention to travel to Jamaica was halted due to the pandemic, the fact that *Out of Many, One People* is currently shifting discourses about Caribbean queer identities demonstrates that she is already charting her own path toward self-discovery. In this way, my use of the principle of art as self-love in relation to Roye's creative work highlights the extent to which second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women's experiences reflect self-led meanings that are not necessarily modeled after those of prior generations.

Roye's photograph, "Kami" (fig. 20), of the queer artist Kamilah Apong whose work I also explore in this chapter, is one example of how her art brings second-generation fashionings of Black Caribbean Canadian queer identities into the open. I again read this image in response to Roye's notion of loudness as visibility, as well as questions about the frequency of images posed by Tina Campt (2017) where she states, "some photos are not quiet at all. Some reverberate loudly through the complex multimodal frequencies of black fugitivity and black futurity" (116). Kami's photo is framed by a floral-patterned backdrop of velvet greens evoking sentiments of a time past like the bedspread in the earlier photograph of Cassandra and Tee. This background of forest greens provides a stark contrast to the mustard yellow two-piece skirt set and hooped earrings Apong wears. You might glimpse the tattoo on her forearm pointing the way toward her right hand that effortlessly balances a pot of tropical fruits above her 3b-c Afro curls.[17] Mangos and half-ripe plantains peek out above the popular Caribbean household item atop her head—the grease-stained Dutch pot—which evokes a sense of familiarity in conjunction with Apong's self-assured posture and confident stare.

[17] This alphanumeric identification follows a widely used system of categorization that sorts hair types according to curl pattern which ranges from straight (1) to tight coils (4a-4c) (Floyd 2013).

I correlate this image of Apong with nineteenth century photographic depictions of Black women plantation labourers in the Caribbean.[18] It is worth noting that photography emerged at the same time as the end of slavery in the British Caribbean, and Krista Thompson (2011) shares how existing photographic archives provide new insight into the histories of enslaved Africans as well as their descendants (40). Apong's gaze in Roye's photograph underscores the relationship between this contemporary image and those depicting the formerly enslaved by asserting complex expressions of Black women's agency that negate the tendency to exoticize them as depicted in photographs of Black women immediately following emancipation. Situating this history of photography within a wider context, that recalls the foremothers of second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women artists, illuminates not only how this image coincides with the legacy of slavery's attempts to fix Black women within subjugated positions of servitude, but also how Roye subverts notions of Caribbean domesticity by reclaiming Black peasant women's agency through a revision of the trope of the "market woman."[19]

The items that surround Kami shed further light on specifically second-generation Black Canadian relationships to the Caribbean. For example, this Dutch pot has been clearly used many times as indicated by the traces of oil that have solidified on the outside. Its deliberate placement atop Apong's head rather than on a stove with contents that are not usually contained in a Dutch pot, however, defies its everyday use and disrupts the gendered and racialized assumptions about the role of the Caribbean petty trader/higgler that is normatively understood to be "women's work" (Hart 1996, 103).

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[18] Some of these images were displayed at the Art Gallery of Ontario in the Fragments of Epic Memory exhibit which house photographs with labels, such as, "Sugar cane workers," "Market woman," "Domestics with Yams…" and so on.

[19] See Gina A. Ulysse's Downtown Ladies: Informal Commercial Importers, A Haitian Anthropologist and Self-Making in Jamaica (2008) for a discussion and reimagining of the archetypal construction of the "market woman" in the Caribbean.

I also read Apong's carefree response to this "dirty" Dutch pot as a strategy for confronting racist depictions that construct Black peoples as unclean, as her portrayal by Roye literally and figuratively tackles these constructions "head on" by simultaneously overturning the stereotypes of the Mammy (the desexualized Black worker) and Jezebel (the hypersexualized Black woman). My later discussions in this chapter of Apong's music and its embrace of the "messiness" of the Black queer genre of disco, in particular, confirm Roye's inversion of these racist tropes (2020). Roye's transformation of the Dutch pot also demonstrates Tina Campt's notion of refusal as "not a simple act of opposition or resistance" but an outright rejection of racist terms imposed on Black life by "refusing to accept or deny these terms as their truth" (109, 113). I read the everyday symbols in this photo as a portrayal of Black life where gendered expressions of "Blackness" and queerness in both Caribbean and Canadian contexts, which are often read as separate, become fused in new ways. Roye's photographic lens, thus, emphasizes the inseparability of these intersections while providing a glimpse into what it means for second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women to just "be" according to their own terms.

I link these self-defining constructions to the principle of art as self-love since this image of Kamilah Apong represents a Black woman's agential choice to love herself by unapologetically asserting her personhood as shown through her direct and confident gaze. This self-loving decision connects to Audre Lorde's assertion of the destructive implications of not acknowledging the "many different ingredients" of one's identity (120). This practice of self-love through the arts as a recognition of Black women's multiple intersections is further indicated in Roye's discussion about the extent to which her own intersections of gender, sexuality, race and class influence the images she captures:

> We're just here. Trying to survive and thrive. I think that's what it means to be. To be more specific with my work, I can't not tie my work to Blackness. Blackness and my work will always be together. I like to make work that's important to me and my Blackness is important to me. That will always be woven into anything I do because at the end of the day, I'm a Black woman. I can't take that away. That'll always be the perspective I'm coming at with any piece of work. Even if it's something that I'm hired to do, it's still the perspective of a Black woman. You're going to get a different perspective versus a fucking random white dude. Like, it's always going to be something that's important. (2020)

Prioritizing the importance of her own perspective as a Black woman, as opposed to that of a "fucking random white dude," demonstrates how Roye's work is central to the dismantling of white supremacy by disrupting the normalized white (queer) male gaze. It is precisely this gaze that enables urban spaces, like Toronto, to be celebrated as the epitome of queer inclusion, while Black and racialized queer experiences are repeatedly being pushed out and silenced (Bain 82). Roye's priotitization of self-love throughout her creative process, therefore, counteracts the "destructive and fragmenting" ways in which white supremacist structures within dominant queer discourses attempt to silence her (Lorde 120).

An additional example of the different ways that Roye negotiates relationships to the Caribbean through her artwork is shown in a photograph of R.Flex (fig. 21).[20] In this relaxed yet commanding image, they can be seen inhaling the air with their face turned upward toward the sunlight.

Their full black outfit is contrasted by their bleached blonde low-cut hairstyle with eyebrows that match and rival the brightness of the sunlight hitting their face. They are also adorned with a

[20] R.Flex is a Black queer non-binary Toronto-based electro-R&B artist.

small hoop earring on their left ear and a biker-styled chain-linked necklace. I read their matching blonde hair and eyebrows in ways that further queer Jamaican dancehall aesthetics while echoing the ways in which Black Caribbean sexualities performed in dancehall spaces are "always already queer in that they did not or could not conform to white heteronormative expectations of the right way to do sex and gender" (Attai et al. 20). R.Flex's aesthetical choices, then, illuminate Walcott's (2007) discussion about the paradoxical stance/key role that Black queer people have always played in defining normative styles since, "[t]hese styles infiltrate and in many cases become central parts of what we can now call the 'mainstram' queer community – meaning that these styles cross over into whiteness" (237). In addition to being linked to a wider stylistic appropriation of Black queer aesthetics, R.Flex's presence in relation to a specifically Caribbean context also outlines the extent to which queer aesthetics also show up in spaces like the dancehall and complicate ongoing constructions of this space as overtly heteronormative and/or homophobic.

I also read this image of R.Flex as coinciding with Roye's earlier statements about Black queer and trans peoples being comfortably "open or out in the city" yet not while at home. The concrete block structure behind them, which is also surrounded by a zinc fence, raises questions about the identity of the city in which the photograph was taken. The fence and concrete structure together evoke a particular kind of Caribbean experience. This experience is one attributed to working-class Caribbean populations who have been systemically neglected by the state, those who are associated with high crime rates and poverty (Osbourne 58; McKinson 306). R.Flex's still, confident, and grounded stance in the midst of elements which symbolize poverty (in the Caribbean), however, offers important visualizations of safety and security that Black queer communities create regardless of their socioeconomic status. The comfortable stillness

evoked in this outdoor photograph also gestures toward themes of strength and resilience often attached to Black queer survival even while Black queer people are subject to everyday iterations of homophobia.

Fig. 21. Photograph of R. Flex. *Out of Many, One People*, 2019. Courtesy of Brianna Roye.

In our interview, Roye, however, specifies additional experiences pertaining to Black Caribbean Canadian community life that disrupt these normalized discourses by highlighting other kinds of readings of Black queer life her photography gestures toward:

> I think we're multifaceted people, and I want to get away from the idea that we're also just strong and resilient because we're not that only. We're that, but we're also many other things…And I think that's what I'm kind of learning now, that to be Black is to be present. We're always so focused on the future, and building for the future and what it means for us. But we need to kind of be more present as Black people. (2020)

R.Flex exemplifies Roye's suggestions by demonstrating the possibilities of being aware and present in the moment as members of Black Canadian communities without waiting for a future that always seems out of reach. Roye's perspectives resonate with Andrea A. Davis' (2022) concept of a "future now," which (re)defines constructions of Black diasporic temporality as the kind of future Black people can live in now (20).

Roye's emphasis on the present rather than a preoccupation with an unguaranteed future reflects a second-generation Canadian commitment inherited from the first-generation to survive, while demonstrating that Black women also possess the self-awareness/obligation required for them to thrive. This self-awareness surrounds the active choice to be still despite being subject to a "hegemonic nation" that consistently betrays Black women's bodies, histories and dreams (Davis 2022, 20). Davis notes that existing anxieties about the future are directly related to the betrayal of nation-state promises that are grounded in logics fueled by racial capitalism. Black peoples' relationship to work in the context of wider Black Canadian womanhood further demonstrates why the overall Black women's art praxis I define in chapter one is imperative.

For example, my promotion of the cultivation of self-love and centering of the self on behalf of wider communities, moves beyond ideas of strength and resilience to acknowledge the need for Black women to be more in tune with their bodies and accept when they may need to take a break.

As a second-generation Black Canadian woman, I am acutely aware of how previous generations of Black women from the Caribbean who have surrounded my own life have work(ed) extremely hard, some, even to the point where they became too sick to continue and sadly passed away. My late Grandmother, Heleise Gooding; her sister (my Grandaunt), Carlene Reid; and my Godmother, Kay Blair, are just a few of many examples of this painful reality signifying how Black women's domestic and other forms of racialized and gendered labour uncover the continuities between slavery and freedom in our present-day (Hartman 2007). To be still, then, as a form of self-reflection, confronts the ongoing "superexploitation" of Black women in Canada (Boyce Davies 2). Roye's encouragement of stillness ultimately advocates for life-saving interventions on behalf of Black Canadian women.

Roye's emphases on stillness, in addition to the personal yet collective awareness of the central role Black women play in Black communities further signifies the important historical and contemporary stories linking first and second-generation Caribbean women in Canada. Sandra Brewster highlights this when she recalls having a seat at the kitchen table as a child beside other Black women family members and being immersed in political conversations about race and other local news (2020). Black women's collective experiences show how previous generations' strenuous relationships to labour make possible our current realities and privileges.

These generational influences inform how second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women understand themselves in relation to their wider societies in ways that both mirror and depart from first-generation viewpoints. Some of those alternative viewpoints are present in Roye's overall intent for her project as outlined in her underlining message behind *Out of Many, One People*:

> There's a lot of us, and a lot of us are thriving and existing in an open way, proudly. So, I just want to combat the stigma. But also, almost like a beacon for other queer Caribbean people to see that 'Oh wow, there's a community of us that exists.' We don't necessarily have to be in the shadows. We all love differently. We all come in different shapes, sizes, shades. Some are poly. Some are monogamous. Some are more introverted. Some are more extroverted. Some like PDA. It's the same thing with Blackness where there's so many different layers to us. We're all multifaceted individuals, and [we need] to show that because there's stereotypes about what queerness looks like, especially in Black contexts. Like Black gay men are this… Black queer women are this... There's no fluidity to it. (2020)

Through Roye's emphasis on the fluidity of Black Caribbean queer and trans experiences, Out of Many, One People calls out the hypocrisy of the Jamaican national motto while ultimately demonstrating the ways in which "we all love differently." These varied photographic representations of love contribute to a larger archive of Black queer experiences and (re)define Black queer historical and contemporary narratives in Canada and the Caribbean. I understand Roye's transnational shifts as indicative of the "radical interpretive possibilities" offered by her images (Campt 5-6).

Although Roye mentions that this project was born out of a lack of a readily traceable history of Afro-Caribbean Canadian queer communities, a broader understanding of what constitutes the archive would pay closer attention to the value of oral histories. The contemporary Black Caribbean Canadian queer and trans lives being depicted in Roye's work have been made possible by, for example, the internal discussions around kitchen tables and the community-based organizing that took place inside of people's homes decades ago (Dryden 2018). Further archival reference points that Roye calls for are identified in Syrus Marcus Ware's (2020) discussion of the habitual erasing of stories about Black life and resistance on Turtle Island.

In response to this erasure, Ware importantly calls into question why Black subjects are "always already conceptualized as new additions" to the archive (282). To reject the presumed newness of Black archival presence we must then acknowledge the 2SLGBTQ+ led activism of the 1970s and 1980s that confronted apartheid, disability rights, homelessness, HIV/AIDS and many other issues both in Canada and abroad (Ware 283). Stories about the strategies used in the 1970s in response to a lack of social services catering to Toronto-based queer communities in particular—for example, the informal ways that queer and trans people would lend aid in response to housing security—must also be acknowledged (Nolan 2017). Roye's photography is, therefore, contributing to an existing archive already comprised of the very reference points she was initially seeking.

Expanding what constitutes the archive also illuminates the direct links between the earlier activism by and for Black Canadian queer communities and Black Lives Matter Toronto (BLMTO).

Beverly Bain states, "[t]hey are brave because we were brave, too" (qtd. in Dryden 2018, 79) outlining the continuities between past and present community advocacy led by Black Canadian queer and trans peoples, many of whom are of Caribbean descent (Dryden 2018; Lord and Zuberi 2017). These historical connections show how Black queer organizing becomes centralized in the propelling of Black community development and civic engagement as demonstrated in the ongoing pushback against police brutality spearheaded by BLMTO (Khan and Newbold 2018, 139). So, to revisit Roye's previous statement in chapter one where she says, "[w]e need to have the grace that we extend, extended back to us" (2020), it is important to recognize the tremendous amount of grace, strength and bravery required to put one's life in harm's way while advocating for the freedom of Black Canadians and other Black peoples throughout the African diaspora. That queer and trans people are the driving forces behind current Black Canadian community activism means that such expressions of grace must be extended toward them also.

Although Roye's demand for communal grace offers a significant rereading of the Canadian societal reception of Black community activists and activism, she importantly specifies that she is not an activist herself:

> One thing that I've taken a dislike to, is the automatic label of marginalized people, specifically, Black queer people, as activists. My work can be activism but I myself am not an activist. Just because I am someone who's oppressed, speaking about these things, doesn't necessarily make me an activist. It's just this weird thing, where at the same time, being Black is political. There's no way around it, so it's like, I myself, I don't see myself as an activist, but my art can be that.

> And my art can help push narratives and stories that need to be told in order for the work to be done. So, I recognize how important that is. (2020)

Roye's viewpoint acknowledges how constructions of race often read Black artwork as community activism that resists white supremacy. While Roye is cognizant of the valuable ways her photography resonates with her audience, solely articulating the impact of her work within the context of resistance would be limiting. Thinking beyond resistance should not be read as a disregard for the critical revolutionary changes made possible via community activism.

This artistic discussion of second-generation Black Canadian women's experiences is nonetheless deserving of broader and more generous reflections of African diasporic life. I close my analysis of Roye's photography, therefore, by contemplating Quashie's inquiry about whether or not it is possible to "engage the public discourse of black identity beyond the imperative of resistance" (27). The fourth and final image from Roye that I sit with was taken outdoors as evident in the green grass blurred in the background contrasting the subject's yellow snake print shirt sleeves (fig. 22). Their relaxed posture is brought into focus by both of their hands which have the words "OPEN MIND" tattooed above their knuckles. Outside of the tattoos as distinguishing markers, the absence of other specificities, such as the subject's face evoke a sense of openness and obscurity which parallel Amideo's discussion about how the "[l]iquidity, fluidity, malleability, elusiveness, and opacity" of the sea/water break apart and expand strict gender binaries (2). I read this image as an acknowledgement of the possibilities enabled by nonbinary people in particular who have long been destabilizing fixed notions about gender. This image also captures my interpretation of the underlying premise of Roye's overall work: It could have been you or me in front of her lens—No matter who is being captured, they are a human being and that in and of itself is enough for them to matter.

That is enough for them to be free. And quite frankly, it should not have to take an open mind for one's humanity to be recognized and valued.

This chapter thus far has demonstrated precisely how an open mind has the capacity to refashion understandings of Black queer legibility that ensure the survival of Black communities. An open mind facilitates endless readings of Black queer life in Canada by demystifying Black community archives in ways that do not only depend on visual markers. This open mind also dispels the mythicized fabrication of the Caribbean as overwhelmingly homophobic by highlighting the long-history of queer presence throughout the region. An open mind importantly does not compartmentalize race and sexualities and makes clear the full complexities of Black queer and trans life. An open mind breaks apart the stereotypical constructions of Black queer and trans peoples in ways that celebrate and affirm the undeniable fact that "we all love differently" (Roye 2020). An open mind is what is ultimately required for us to construct a future beyond a need for Black queer and trans peoples to simply "exist loudly" as we build a world that is not founded upon heteronormative anti-Blackness. Roye's images chart a trajectory toward these possibilities through her visual demonstration of the extent to which photography cultivates a futurity that rejects the societal stifling of Black queer and trans people's ability to love and live life, fully, "in dignity and complexity" (Campt 109). With an open mind, I continue discussions about Black Caribbean Canadian queer experiences in relation to the principle of art as self-love through an analysis of Kamilah Apong's music with *Tush*.

Fig. 22. Tattooed hands. *Out of Many, One People*, 2019. Courtesy of Brianna Roye.

To Darnelladon (And Beyond)

Do you see where we're goin'? It's not so far – Tush

The quirky yet captivating music video, "To Darnelladon (and Beyond)," centers the lead singer of *Tush*, Kamilah Apong, while displaying glitter in excess, a thorough use of Technicolor, and the occasional exaggerated bodily feature. This video takes you on an intergalactic journey with Darnelladon and beyond as its destination, while Apong leads the way.[21] As the sole subject in the music video, Apong illuminates art as self-love in a powerful and unapologetic display of her whole self as a Black queer woman, inviting the viewer to follow her along this journey. In my discussion of Apong in this chapter, I am primarily interested in her self-representation and I use various stills from her music video to analyze the ways in which her body and queer sexuality disrupt any tidy understandings of gender, race, sexuality, or place.

[21] Darnelladon is an imagined space named after Apong's partner.

I suggest that the imagery in the video, which is also an archive of the live performances of this disco-house band, reflects Apong's commitment to not only acknowledging, but celebrating, the Black and queer roots of the genres she performs in. Many scholars support Apong's claim that the genres of disco and house emerge specifically from African American experiences with influences that can be traced to the Caribbean and West Africa (Fikentscher 2015; Lawrence 236; Thompson 1984; Toop 1984). Given that these converging Afrodiasporic musical influences are grounded in a Black queer experience, I argue that Apong's contributions to Tush reinforce her intersections of race, gender, sexuality and cultural geography as a mixed-race queer woman of African and Chinese heritage of Trinidadian and Jamaican descent (Apong 2020).

Apong's complex intersections show up in her music in very unexpected ways as exemplified in tracks such as, "Leh We Guh" where, as Apong states, she deliberately interweaves soca rhythms into disco and house music: "I wanted to have some soca rhythms in there. I can't make a soca track, because that would be very embarrassing. I don't need to put on a Trinidadian accent for an entire song to do this. But that phrase is enough!" (2020). This engagement with her Caribbean roots results from Apong living at home with her Trinidadian father who regularly plays soca and listens to Trinidadian news daily. Being surrounded by these Caribbean cultural influences fostered the kind of creative environment necessary for the development of this song (Apong, 2020). Simple gestures, such as using everyday Caribbean phrases like "leh we guh" / "let's go" / "let us go" exemplifies how second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women self-define relationships to the Caribbean in new ways.

This phrase registers various meanings, for example, "leh we go" or "let's go" is a commanding invitation to embark on a journey together.

It entails a sense of urgency that is maintained through other Tush songs like “To Darnelladon (and Beyond)” and captures this band’s insistence on the necessity of movement. This fluid position requires having the flexibility to define freedom according to one’s own terms while seeking safe spaces to be as Black people, even if it is in outer space. Interpreting this phrase as “let us go” is an alternative command, an unequivocal demand to give us our freedom; To literally and figuratively “get your knee off our necks” as echoed by Rev. Al Sharpton at George Floyd’s funeral. In being framed as a statement rather than a question, “let us go” claims the right to exist without permission and identifies the ways in which Black people have historically and contemporarily asserted their freedom and humanity. I understand such daring claims as linked to a longer history of Black resistance in the Caribbean such as, the Haitian Revolution which formerly enslaved people proclaimed the first free Black state in history.

Additional relationships to the Caribbean appear in the repetitive elements in Apong's music. I read the repetition of the instrumentation, along with the phrase “leh we guh,” as indicative of the Afrodiasporic tradition of chanting. Chanting is a practice exemplified in Rastafari traditions where music is central to the affirming of African being, galvanizing community, and cultivating a sense of “grounding” in opposition to the imperialist “oppressive State” of the West/Babylon (Cooper 1995, 121). Using Bob Marley as an example, Carolyn Cooper (1995) describes the repetitive practice of chanting as both a medium and a message (121). Repetition functions as an “enabler of affective experience, as it creates a cyclical feeling of solidness or consistency” (Woods 188). Repetition is also defined as an organizing principle of Black music (Snead 652), and so following Apong’s lead, I extend this chanting methodology to the genres of disco and house.

In my reading of "leh we guh" as a chant, I am interested in the extent to which the sonic repetition/chanting in disco and house share a similar capacity to reggae music to operate as a method. Beginning with the underlying premise that chanting as a method is meant to overthrow Western imperialism (Middleton 10), Apong's music must then be read as a disruption of heteronomativity in Canada and the Caribbean as her art, as well as her intersections, are always already Black and queer. My reading of her work in this way is supported by the principles of art as self-love and art as embodied history since Apong self-identifies as a queer bisexual and polyamorous woman while her work is also grounded in her lived-experiences as a second-generation Canadian (2020).

It is also worth noting that "Leh we guh" was completed during the widespread protests following the murder of George Floyd in 2020:

> By the time we reopened the track…I was sad because my dad and Darnell were so sad. I was holding a lot of space for them as Black men in the house. They were just down, then I was down. So, I went to Jamie's [the other member of Tush] being like, 'Listen, I'm really sad and I need to be witness and just space held.' And Jamie was amazing and bought me my favorite food and he's so great… I also was like, 'I want to speak to Black people in this song because shit is very heavy right now. Shit is bleak. And Black people everywhere are just sad. And in despair and hurting.' (Apong 2020)

Much like Anique Jordan's and Shi Wisdom's artwork discussed in chapter two, this song is another example of how Black Canadian women artists respond to routine and disproportionate occurrences of Black death. That Apong was overcome by not only her own grief, but by that of the Black men in her household further indicates how Black women experience extra burdens by carrying the weight of their wider communities.

This weight is exactly why the Black women's art praxis I offer in this dissertation centers the arts as a way of facilitating new attempts of "carrying on" despite the daily overt and covert iterations of anti-Blackness that interrupt Black life. Brian Ward (1998) also outlines the role that music plays in offering other possibilities for Black life. As he argues, disco was "more than just a danceable form of music"; Black people danced to disco to "keep from crying" (428, 354). These sentiments are echoed by Apong in an interview with Vanessa Polojac where she reveals her conviction that performing is "a necessary frequency" to keep her alive (qtd. in Polojac). Black genres like disco, therefore, carry multiple meanings that go beyond a mere desire to have a good time. This further exemplifies Shana Redmond's description of Black music as a "laboratory for the interplay of racial solidarity and struggle" (10). Apong's performances do not only sustain her but also the many Black people who encounter her music.

As Apong explained in our conversations, her performance derives from a wide range of musical influences she was introduced to by her father who would often play from genres specifically tied to Black experiences, like jazz:

> I have to give credit to my father because he listened to a wide range of Black music. A wide range of Black music, which is why it influenced me so much… My dad has an extensive vinyl collection. And that's also why I'm a vinyl freak. Madd vinyl and he would play me all, just when it was time to start cleaning on a Saturday… Huge music collection. My dad is a very well versed in Black music, and other music, but largely in Black creative music. (2020)

Being raised in an environment steeped in Black music of all kinds is something I can relate to. My father often played cassette tapes of various genres, including soul, disco, reggae, funk, Motown, and R&B.

These interior moments of Black life I experienced while growing up have certainly influenced my own musical tastes and craft. This is why I am so interested in the ways in which Black women's various engagements with musical styles that directly emerge out of Black experiences might cultivate new second-generation cultural relationships with the wider African diaspora.

The close relationship between Apong's music and her understanding of herself as a Black queer woman account for why she so adamantly seeks to uncover/recover the roots of Blackness in disco and house music as a response to how the music industry commodifies Black music and promotes heteronormativity and whiteness. Apong's obligations to disco's "authenticity" must then be understood as her exercising of art as a practice of self-love since her performances center and affirm her own intersections while simultaneously allowing her to participate in acts of sonic resistance that encourage multifaceted expressions of Black being through the recovery of memory. This understanding of Blackness otherwise follows Redmond's notion of music as a method to imagine and make possible things that are seemingly unimaginable (1). These complex and wide-ranging representations include not only the "messy" performances in disco but also the contrasting "prim and proper" ones (Apong 2020). By always creating the space for polarizing performances of Blackness and everything in between, Apong maintains space for broader understandings and possibilities of Black Canadian life.

Apong's community impact is further illuminated in McKittrick's (2007) description of music as a mechanism to articulate the historical present through space and place (139). McKittrick reads music and music-making, therefore, as intimately linked to Black geographies as they alter the soundscape and simultaneously represent "…creativity, politics, sex, violence, struggle, and diaspora connections" while serving as critical locations for "invention, reinvention, parody, performativity, community, and critique" (138).

Following on McKittrick's argument that Black women have always maintained intimate relationships to geography (60), I argue that the broader impact of Apong's music encourages the creation of uniquely Black Caribbean Canadian queer spaces and identities.

Applying the chant as a method for dismantling white supremacy in the context of "To Darnelladon (and Beyond)," for example, I demonstrate how Apong affirms specifically Black queer Canadian and Caribbean identities and spaces. I understand the lyrics in her song, "[t]iny particles of matter/Tiny particles of fun!" which repeat throughout the song as linked to Kathryn Yusoff's (2018) discussion of the Anthropocene. Grounded in Eurocentric notions of geology, the Anthropocene separates matter from time and space by sustaining a dichotomous split of matter into nonlife and life making this binary "foundational to New World geographies" (5). In situating Darnelladon in the realm of the Afrofuture, Apong creates new meaning for "tiny particles" and/or matter that do not rely on the same "modes of objectification" (Yusoff 6) required to sustain white supremacy notions of the earth. Instead, she centers Black queer joy and defines matter as "fun".

Apong, indeed, offers an explicit critique of the racism and respectability politics involved within public-facing representations of disco. Her critiques are related to how whiteness silences disco's historical Black queer roots particularly in areas relating to aesthetics:

> I'm realizing as I talk… that I want queer alternative aesthetics to be centered again in disco. And we're seeing it again because they always say 'disco is coming back.' It's never gone anywhere, first of all. [It's] just that white people stopped fucking with it. But now they're saying it's coming back again because Jessie Ware, and Kylie Minogue are putting records out again. And I'm like, this narrative that disco is coming back through cis white straight women, is annoying… Disco and house is queer music.

That's where it came from and I really want to honour all of what that means in terms of its aesthetic. Therefore, that's my kind of like goal…to have a very wide-ranging understanding of what Blackness can look like within such a specific genre. (2020)

The video for *Tush*'s "To Darnelladon (and Beyond)," not surprisingly, directly challenges the normative construction of disco in the music industry in ways that prioritize representations of cisgender white women.[22]

Fig. 23. "To Darnelladon (and Beyond)" Tush still – Kamilah Apong emitting an explosion of Technicolor, 2018. Copyright © Victoria Long. Courtesy of Kamilah Apong.

Apong, as the central focus of this video, challenges this white supremacist erasure by making it clear that the genre of disco comes from a specifically Black queer vantage point. In figure 23, we glimpse the bejeweled top of her red-fringed bodysuit which compliments the silver rhinestones tracing both of her eyelids. These red and silver gems stand out even further against Apong's silvery glittered skin and shiny glossed lips.

[22] Constructing white artists as the leading face of genres that emerge out of Black experiences have a longer history that precedes disco. Practices of the cultural appropriation of Black music are ongoing as other contemporary genres, such as, Rock n' Roll often have their Black origins obscured as well (Birnbaum 2012; Morris 2019; Underwood 2018; Voynovskaya 2020).

Her large Afro hairstyle and big hooped earrings framed by the explosion of rainbow colours radiating from her body add to Apong's subscription to the Black queer origins of the genres she operates in. In my previous scholarship, I have discussed the ways in which the Afro has historically been politicized as an "authentic" representational marker of "Blackness" (Brown 2018). In this scene, then, the Afro anchors Apong's Blackness as the primary site of her multiracial identities, while the colours of the rainbow, which symbolize 2SLGBTQ+ pride, exemplify Roye's efforts to celebrate Black queer life in the loudest ways possible.

Apong's refusal to be silent further exemplifies the various strategies she uses to prioritize the fullness of her being as expressed in her music. This self-prioritization is another example of Apong's engagement with art as self-love and I also link her artistry in this way to Audre Lorde's (1984) notion of the erotic. Lorde describes the erotic as women's creative lifeforce (54-55). As a method of empowerment, the erotic can be expressed through Black women's language, (oral) histories, artwork, love, dance, work and everyday lives (Lorde 55). Lorde further states that "[r]ecognizing the power in the erotic within our lives can give us the energy to pursue genuine change within our world, rather than merely settling for a shift of characters in the same weary drama" (59). The following readings I offer of Apong's complex relationship to disco's aesthetics reflect her trajectory toward the materialization of this idea of the erotic.

I begin this reading of the erotic in Apong's art by recalling a moment in one of our interviews where she specifies the conflicting societal constructions of how disco "should" look:

> If I think about the Darnelladon video, I wanted to have body hair. I remember I wanted to show my stomach more in terms of it not being flat– I'm constantly grappling with how aesthetically sensationalized disco music is as a genre.

> I don't know a genre that's more aesthetically based. You think disco, Afros, soul train, bellbottoms, glamorous women, flamboyant femininity... Which is so fun about it and there's so much to enjoy there. However, I think when people think about disco in that way, it actually really limits the range and depth of what disco is. At the root of it, disco is a communal Black queer underground heteronormative resistance. So, when disco became whitewashed and commodified in that way, all of the campiness and queerness and weirdness was sanitized into this like Saturday Night Fever... which is a part of it. But, all the messiness, and sweatiness and dirtiness of it kind of got lost. (2020)

Ward (1998) supports Apong's historical knowledge of the genre she operates in by confirming that, "[d]isco, as it swept America between roughly 1976 and 1980, was a simplified, sanitized and straightened version of a genuinely exciting and innovative dance and style-based phenomenon which had flourished first—and continued to do so throughout disco's commercial apotheosis—in gay black clubs" (424). The obscuring of this Black artistic history and the normalized representation of disco through whiteness and heteronormativity, explains why it is important for Apong to return to the genre's Black queer roots.

Apong's critique of the sanitization of queer representations in disco reflects previous conversations in this chapter about Roye's photography, particularly in the photo where Apong is the subject. Much like the greasy Dutch pot on her head which exemplifies a second-generation insistence on the fact that it is okay to sit with the dirt/be "dutty," efforts to dismantle racist depictions of Black people can be messy. I am, therefore, interested in thinking more about how these normative "sanitized" representations of disco have direct implications for not only Apong in regards to the relationships between cleanliness, body politics, and whiteness, but also for Black women more broadly.

This interest is not just limited to Apong since her active re-centering of Black queer experiences through Tush's performances is also instructive for expressions of Black freedom and thinking Blackness otherwise for everyday Black peoples. Using examples from Black women R&B and rap artists, Rana A. Emerson (2002) highlights how dominant constructions of beauty and attractiveness are read through body size and weight (122). Such constructions, however, are not limited to R&B and rap, since Apong also experienced similar pressures to lose weight when she initially started Tush (2020).

Apong's ongoing uneasiness demonstrates how normative beauty standards, which privilege whiteness and perpetuate fatphobia, routinely impact Black women performers regardless of what musical genre they are engaging. This uniquely gendered and racialized translation has to do with a wider history concerning an underlying societal preference for thinness that is normally reserved solely for white women's bodies. This thin preference ultimately sustains social hierarchies according to race, sex and class in ways that degrade Black women while disciplining white women (Strings 6). Sabrina Strings (2019) traces the historical processes that uphold stereotypical standards of beauty by revealing how fatness became inextricably linked to "immorality" and, therefore, constructions of Blackness (4–5). Apong's initial anxieties about her appearance during the early stages of Tush are a consequence of this history. Her experiences demonstrate how this history by valorizing harmful constructions of Black women's bodies continues to negatively impact Black women's physical and psychological well-being.

Apong's aesthetical pressures are not limited to body size and also appear in complicated decisions about how she should style her hair and the clothes she should wear.

She states, for example, that “I needed to wear a wig or have extensions in to have the hella hella big hair…I needed to wear slinky dresses. I struggled because I can’t wear heels. I hate wearing heels on stage. I like to be barefoot, so I can stomp around and jump around and get on the floor and everything…so I was like ‘oh, I’m ruining the disco aesthetic’” (Apong 2020). Apong’s specification of these multiple aesthetical concerns about her style of dress further indicates the close relationship between the wardrobes of Black women performers, and the commodification of Black performance culture and body image. This is why Gail Hilson Woldu (2013) describes Black women’s wardrobes as a site to confront Black women’s stereotypes and challenge detrimental images of Black women’s bodies (101–02).

While Apong’s initial concerns reinforced narrow ideas about what disco “should” be, the fact that she is now committed to “a very wide-ranging understanding of what Blackness can look like within such a specific genre” (2020), shows that her conceptualization of how Black women are represented in disco have broadened. It is through this eventual realization that I locate Apong’s embrace of the erotic. As she contended with how normative representations of disco ultimately stifle her, she chose to be led by her own definition of what disco could be. This is what Lorde outlines as the erotic, the ability for women to choose to “live from within outward,” by staying in tune with their feelings and refusing “suffering and self-negation” (58). Apong’s self-revelation, therefore, made possible the wide-ranging forms of self-representation we see in the “To Darnelladon” video.

I am particularly interested in this still (fig. 24) where Apong is dressed in a light rose pink bodysuit with a translucent metallic-winged cape. Her orange lipstick contrasts with the circle of pearls that outline each of her eyes and her glittery unshaved armpits.

This glitter extends to her hair as well which is parted down the middle and styled in two puffs and paired with a hair chain accessory that has a teardrop shaped jewel in its center and matches her silver hooped earrings. Apong appears to have been transported to another dimension in this scene. “Let’s go to Darnelladon and beyond” is, therefore, a statement and an invitation for us to join her wherever she is headed (Tush). Perhaps she has already arrived at *Tush*’s intended destination, Darnelladon. The blackened background evokes an outer space sensation in which extraterrestrial presences in the repeated images of Apong in green, purple and yellow shadow her every move. This cosmic sensation gestures toward the wider significance of Darnelladon which represents an alternate realm where Black freedom and imagination are possible as it is located outside of white supremacist, hetereonormative and capitalist structures which continue to limit Black life.

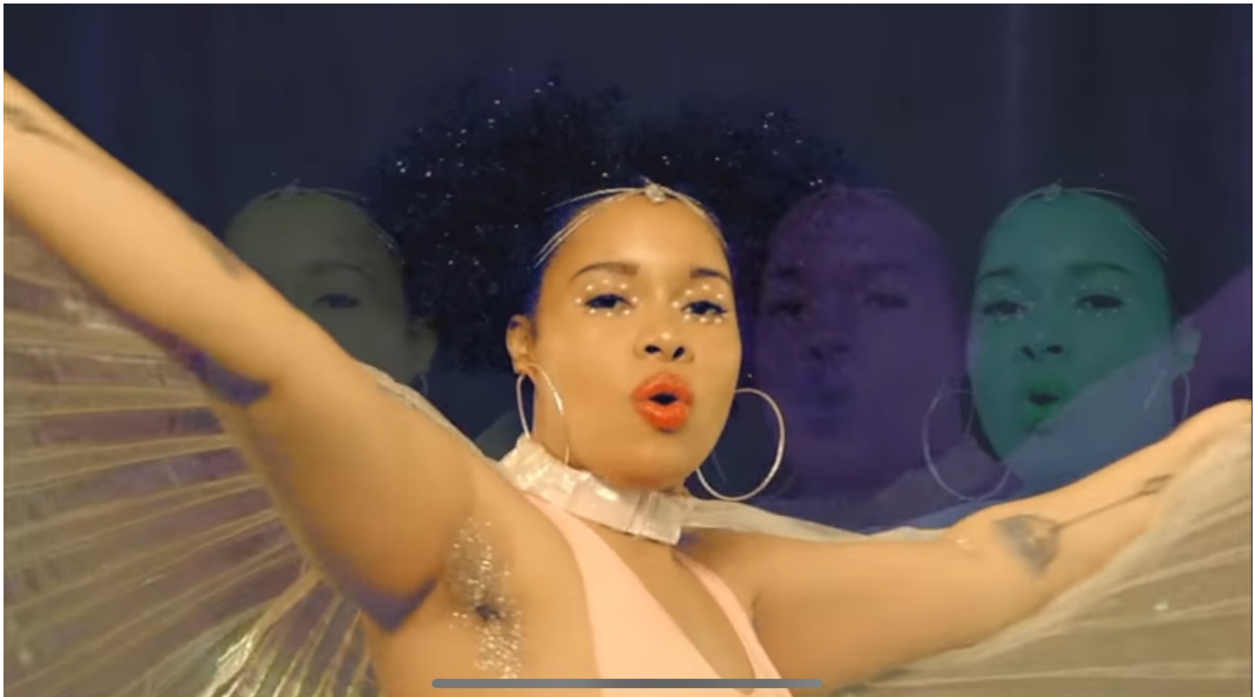

Fig. 24. “To Darnelladon (and Beyond)” Tush still – Kamilah Apong in winged cape, 2018. Copyright © Victoria Long. Courtesy of Kamilah Apong.

The lines, "[d]o you know the way toward Darnelladon? / It's so full of magic you should come along / Travel through the cosmos to Darnelladon" (Tush), along with Apong's cape, suggest that one cannot get there by conventional means. This song and music video together illuminate the radical Black imagination necessary to cultivate alternative spaces where Black queer people can exist. In opposition to a world that refuses and rejects her being, Apong uses her artwork to show us that another world is possible. As Robin G. D. Kelly (2002) states, "the map to a new world is in the imagination" (53). I view Apong's "fictional worlding" as part of the Black diasporic perspective of Afrofuturism which is also grounded in the imagination (Aghoro 331). Nathalie Aghoro (2018) notes the crucial interventions offered by Afrofuturism as it draws from outerspace imaginaries of the Black diaspora to make sense of Black people's realities here on earth (331).

The fact that Apong's outfit in this still reflects a Caribbean carnival aesthetic further exemplifies how such other-worldly constructions are grounded in Caribbean traditions. I read this carnival influence as Apong's self-fashioning of her role in disco on her own terms which are uniquely informed by her second-generation Caribbean Canadian queer identity. Carnival revellers parade in streets, savannahs, and stages across the African Diaspora from Port of Spain, Bridgetown, Toronto, London, and Rio de Janeiro. This carnival tradition is directly linked to a legacy of Black resistance and freedom (La Rose 493). By situating Apong's performance within an Afrofuturist tradition, "To Darnelladon (and Beyond)" bolsters the ongoing interventions of queer Afrofuturist artists, in particular, who continue to "do important transformative and restorative politicocultural work" (Murchison 82).

Examples of such important work are identified in what Gayle Murchison (2018) outlines as “quare black music” which is “created, performed, interpreted, and so on by LGBTQIA African, African American, and African diasporic musicians” whose intersectional identities operate beyond heteronormativity (82-83). Apong’s music certainly fits within Muchison’s definition as her artwork displays her promotion of fluid representations of Black queer identities. This expansion of representations of Blackness through disco has to do with Apong’s realization that what normatively constitutes disco largely erases her own intersections as a Black queer woman.

Due to the privileging of whiteness and heteronormativity in the music industry and wider Canadian society, the performances of Black artists in disco are stratified in ways that prioritize, for example, performances by Diana Ross or Donna Summer over the Black queer artists who were also foundational to the genre, like Sylvester:

> By virtue of being Black in this, it’s Black art. It doesn’t have to look like Donna Summer, who is a queen in her own right, absolutely. But to think that every kind of understanding of disco has to look like that, doesn’t do justice to how much range there is. Because again, it started as such a deeply underground queer, and not even gay as in, man with man, I mean queer. Disco literally broke apart any kind of like binary understanding of straightness and gayness that it was more than that. It dug into that even deeper. Into queerness, mixing and kaleidoscope kind of understandings of gender and sexuality. I want to live in that more. So, defying the idea that I need to have an Afro, for instance, I was like, ‘Can I still be disco with short hair?’ That was definitely something I struggled with for some time…

> What I'm trying to get back to here is that I feel as if, it's important to me that alternative images of Blackness—whether it's like sparkly armpit hair and short hair, queerness and the messy parts of sweaty disco music—it's important to me that that is honoured, and that I don't only subscribe to the glamorous, normative, feminine type of aesthetic. I love playing in that, I love getting glammed up. But I think easily, whiteness wants to only see Blackness performed in that way. (Apong 2020)

By promoting capacious understandings of Black art through a consideration of the expressive cultures of Black artists, Apong engages in art as self-love to claim space for the entirety of her being as a Black queer Canadian woman, while making space for other Black Canadians as well.

That disco as a genre facilitates multiple renderings of Black life is due to the history of this "range" that Apong highlights.

Her repeated emphasis that disco is inherently Black and queer is further supported through the fact that the 1970s dance floor was a location that "exceeded normative conceptions of straight and gay sexuality" (Lawrence 231, 236). Apong's choice to create and perform disco and house music on to her own terms demonstrate how such queering of space continues in the present-day while directly challenging the erasure of Black presence and societal expectations of Black performance. The still with Apong dressed in a coned babydoll while she models a rotary telephone with psychedelic rainbow colours in the background (fig. 25) again exemplifies her rejection of Black queer erasure. The phone, coupled with the grainy/out-of-focus camera lens further blurs our sense of temporality while encountering this work.

This nuanced understanding of time and her anachronistic choice of a rotary phone instead of an android or iPhone not only illuminate the sexual fluidity Amideo evokes in sea/water and Donnell registers in queer theorizations of Caribbean creolization, but also demonstrates Apong's desire not to forget the past and to remain "authentic" to herself and the roots of the genres she performs in.

Fig. 25. "To Darnelladon (and Beyond)" Tush still – Double image of Kamilah Apong holding a rotary telephone. Copyright © Victoria Long. Courtesy of Kamilah Apong.

I also read the fact that she appears twice in this still through inverted reflections as symbolic of the ancient Chinese philosophy of Yin and Yang.

This correlation further illuminates Apong's mixed Caribbean ancestry which includes not only ties to the African continent but China as well. While this Chinese philosophy maintains a dialectical worldview that is grounded in a paradoxical duality (Fang 26), Apong offers her own second-generation Caribbean Canadian version of Yin and Yang by using her body to center Black (and Chinese) queerness and destroy binaric logics. I read the blurred colourful background as further indicative of the ways that the presence of queer identities will always upend fixed constructions of gender and sexuality.

Apong's claim that "[b]y virtue of being Black in this, it's Black art," finally offers a useful point of departure to explore Quashie's notion of quiet alongside Apong's performances and wider understandings of Black Canadian women's representation (2020). This statement signals a particular reading of Black performance that cannot necessarily be tied to resistance as it recognizes the value in the experience of being a Black artist in and of itself. Positing the idea of Black art as is, therefore, reduces the Black artist's "imperative to represent," by rejecting the tendency to construct art as a political statement about race or racism (Quashie 4). I selected the final still (fig. 26), which is comprised of a repeating headshot of Apong, not only because it shares similarities with Sandra Brewster's, "Untitled" 2015-2016 paneled blur which will be discussed in chapter four, but also because the repeating images gesture toward the fact that there are multiple complex sides to Apong, all of which inform her being as a second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian woman artist.

In this image, she appears to be wearing the same caped outfit previously discussed, as well as the same pearled eye circles, and hair jewel. What differs in this scene is the bright coloured rainbow background as opposed to a black background. I read this colour change as an indication that Apong has now arrived at another destination; this one is beyond Darnelladon. Here, is where Apong is able to celebrate every side and/or intersection of her being that is as infinite as the number of times she appears in this still. These various sides of her suggest that it would indeed be limiting to reduce her performance solely to a resistance context as there are many additional readings made possible by her complex being. Quashie thus allows us to read Apong's artwork in ways that make possible a closer attention to the richness of Black life by accounting for the totality of Black Canadian women's multiple and infinite intersections.

Fig. 26. "To Darnelladon (and Beyond)" Tush still – Repeating image of Kamilah Apong. Copyright © Victoria Long. Courtesy of Kamilah Apong.

Conclusion

Brianna Roye and Kamilah Apong's artwork demonstrate how second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women artists offer new readings of Black queer and trans life in the African diaspora by "loudly" affirming the inseparability between Black and queer identities (Roye 2020). I read their artwork through the principle of art as self-love to facilitate a transnational dialogue which begins with Roye's and Apong's lived experiences to stretch beyond Canadian borders through photography and music to explore the richness of Black queer lives in the Caribbean and its diaspora. Roye's photography in the *Out of many, One People* series provides visual methods to claim Black queer space loudly and proudly while profiling the continuities between past and present Black queer activism in Canada and the Caribbean.

Apong's unwavering representations of disco through the *Tush* song, "To Darnelladon (and Beyond)" promotes an acknowledgement of the totality of Black Caribbean Canadian women's intersections.

I suggest that Roye and Apong offer different understandings of "Blackness" otherwise from queer vantage points that underscore the limitless ways that Black queer and trans lives are experienced. Roye's and Apong's self-fashioned identities and artwork create pathways toward Black liberation by cultivating the safe spaces necessary for Black Canadian and Caribbean queer and trans communities to survive and overcome wider systemic neglect and overlapping societal facilitation of Black disposability. By drawing on Amideo's theorization of the sea and water as fluid spaces of potentiality and Donnell's notion of creolized sexualities, the chapter considers alternative ways for understanding gender and sexuality beyond strict binaries, highlighting future directions for my deployment of second-generation Caribbean Canadian perspectives.

CHAPTER FOUR – ART AS EMBODIED HISTORY: ON SECOND-GENERATION BE(LONG)ING

Work that is made from within who you are – Sandra Brewster

In this chapter, I use the principle of art as embodied history to analyze the extent to which memory is housed within the body and is reflected in the artwork Black women artists create. Specifically, I draw on my own practice of music making, as well as Sandra Brewster's photo-based visual art and Camille Turner's performance art to demonstrate how second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women invent and negotiate ways to exist as Black Canadians. Drawing on Brewster's claim that art is "work that is made from within who you are" (2020), I suggest that our artistic contributions explicate the distinct ways in which we negotiate the terms of our be(long)ing within the Canadian nation. The close relationship between the artwork we create and our understandings of self reflects Katherine McKittrick's (2002) theorization of "Canadian blackness" as nonlinear and intertexual while "uncertain, diasporic, and rooted in the nation" in ways that simultaneously foster Black community sentiments of unbelonging (34). By fusing the seemingly antagonistic subject positions of belonging and being, this chapter is specifically interested in complicating this wider sense of unbelonging by positing the category of be(long)ing as a nuanced framework to ground this second-generation discussion.

As a second-generation Black Caribbean immigrant, I understand the category of belonging through what Rinaldo Walcott (2001) describes as "a politic of how to belong to the nation-state as not-quite-citizens," which recognizes the invariable im/possibility of Black Canadianess (127). I, therefore, recognize our being as second-generation Black women artists as both an embodiment of this ever-changing, fluctuating and at times alienated relationship to home, and a commitment to creating the spaces necessary to actualize self-reclamation.

I position this trajectory toward belonging alongside the category of being to outline a second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian rejection of a first-generation imperative to belong, or to participate in what Davis (2022) describes as "competitive and exclusionary models of citizenship" (37). This rejection results from the ways in which a need to belong inherently places the responsibility of recognizing Black people's humanity in the hands of dominant (white) Canadian society. This rejection, thus, grapples with a second-generation ability to claim space within the nation on one's own terms while charting alternative pathways toward being (Canadian).

This creative dialogue extends Alice Walker's (1983) analysis of the Black revolutionary artist's responsibility to "create," "preserve," and serve as "the voice of the people" (135, 138). In this chapter, I recognize second-generation Black women's artwork as iterations of this resisting community voice and position their contributions as a method to create and preserve Black experiences in Canada. This creative dialogue extends Alice Walker's (1983) analysis of the Black revolutionary artist's responsibility to "create," "preserve," and serve as "the voice of the people" (135, 138). In this chapter, I recognize second-generation Black women's artwork as iterations of this resisting community voice and position their contributions as a method to create and preserve Black experiences in Canada.

Blur & Heirloom

Sandra Brewster's *Blur* (2019) is a series of photo-based gel transfers that depict the multifaceted characteristics of Black Canadian life. Gel transfers make it impossible to determine the exact end result of images, so that the unfixed, fluid, and blurred nature of this series highlights the inherent dynamism of Brewster's artwork.

These perfectly imperfect black and white images again reflect McKittrick's (2002) understanding of Canadian Blackness as multilayered and diasporic. In an earlier conversation with Canisia Lubrin, Brewster discusses her approach to making *Blur*, identifying how this series operates in relation to hegemonic aesthetics while emphasizing the wider Black Caribbean Canadian histories that inform the work:

> I'm using Blur as this strategy to draw people in. I have people move in a certain way. I know the blur will have a certain kind of gesture to it. And because too you cannot totally fix what is in front of you… it draws people in… I know that these are typically beautiful images and it's a way of bringing people into the work and having them stay and ponder and think about what they're looking at. I also think that because there are creases and folds and such, these are things that are not necessarily considered beautiful. But then I think what it's doing is adding complexity to whatever the image is that you're looking at. So, it's suggesting that beauty is more so than an aesthetic thing, like something that you're seeing on the surface. I'm hoping that people are engaged with it on a deeper level. (Artist's Talk 2019)

This deeper level of engagement that Brewster advocates is linked to Paul C. Taylor's (2016) description of the philosophy of Black aesthetics which functions as "a kind of assembly" where definitions of beauty, agency and meaning are developed "in the face of oppression, despair, and death" (2). Engaging with *Blur* on a deeper level demands an attention to the definitions of what constitutes Black Canadian life via the wider histories of Transatlantic slavery and colonialism. I suggest, therefore, that *Blur* signifies the dynamic and ever-changing reference points that fashion Black Canada from second-generation viewpoints and thus reflects Brewster's practice of the principle of art as embodied history.

Reading Brewster's *Blur* in relation to this principle allows me to uncover the extent to which this artwork provides meaning for expressions and theorizations of Black Canadian womanhood more broadly. Brewster's underlying premise of Blackness as multiplicity forces us to understand Black women's experiences beyond limited constructions that solely oppose white supremacy. In "Blur 18," for example, I am drawn to the flashing twists, braids or dreadlocked hairstyle the subject wears even as I note that her face (like that of many of the subjects in this exhibit) is turned away from the camera. Previous conversations with Black women about how their hair is directly linked to constructions of race, class, sexuality, ability, and gender in a Canadian context is what draws me to this blur since Black women's hair may or may not be deployed as a site of resistance against the anti-Black nation-state (Brown 2018). The movement captured through the African hairstyle in "Blur 18" and the subject's averted gaze suggest a sense of freedom by illuminating Black being in the everyday with confidence and familiarity, while celebrating Black Canadian women's agency to construct their own sense of *be(long)ing*.

Fig. 27. Sandra Brewster. Blur 18, Photo-based gel transfer on archival paper, 2017, 40x35in. Courtesy of Sandra Brewster.

The subject's upright and confident posture, while she simultaneously looks away from the camera lens, exudes a sense of agency while the viewer's gaze has limited room to fully encounter the work. I read these undetectable and obscured positions as a reversal of power dynamics which typically privilege the onlooker. In this case, the subject appears to be the one passing by, and is unbothered by who chooses to stop and look at her. This refusal evokes a sentiment that there is really not much to see here. Rather than Blackness as a "surprise" (Walcott & Abdillahi 2019, 51), Brewster offers a rather ordinary, routine depiction of Black life in Canada. This sense of everydayness registers Brewster's ultimate intent to create artwork that is not simply a response to wider systems of oppression. It is through this particular objective that I draw links between Blur and Kevin Quashie's analysis of a "consciousness that exists beyond the expectation of resistance" (5).

Black Caribbean Canadian women artists' collective articulations account for the everydayness of Black Canadian life and are especially useful for providing new entry points to expand epistemological conceptualizations of Black Canada. Brewster explicitly shares Quashie's critique of the tendency to prioritize resistance in the following statement:

> There is this tendency for work to be made in response to white supremacy. So, it's always in response to what the white folks or the system has done to Black people and people of colour. And then there's work that I find interesting that is about work that just comes from who we are. So, when I had done the Blur series, I was thinking about that. I was thinking about my travels to South Africa, and Trinidad. Trinidad… especially where the work that people make—not only work that would be considered landscape—work of beaches and palm trees and whatever—but work that people were making that was more conceptual based. It seems typical for me to mention Christopher Cozier.

> He is an artist from Trinidad who runs Alice Yard which is a residency where I had gone. And it's always interesting talking to him about art practices and artwork —where it's made and who's making it. Work that is made from within who you are. So, when I look at the Blur series, that was my attempt to present the experience of a Black person here. But not as something in response to whiteness, it's just who we are. And it's also centering who we are, claiming this as a legitimate form of identity that exists here. And maybe in response to living here but not necessarily whiteness per se. (2020)

Mirroring Quashie's critique of how resistance limits the totality of Black humanity, Brewster consistently demands that the cultural value of her artwork be understood in ways that go beyond contexts of combatting white supremacy. The self-led ways of be(long)ing in Canada captured throughout Brewster's Blur series are interested instead in depicting "who we are" (Brewster 2020). The "more conceptual based" artwork that Brewster references in the passage above is situated outside of the racist logics that render the creative outputs of Black artists as always resisting whiteness. The scratches and folds throughout "Blur 18" evoke the long-standing history of Black presence in Canada and disregard racist assumptions that Black Canadian communities are recent.

Brewster's sense of a collective "we" (as in people of African descent in Canada) is exemplified in "Untitled" 2017-2019 (fig. 28), which depicts several Black people being held together in a matrix. Each individual square shares an equal place in the larger whole as demonstrated by the identical sized rectangle each person is captured in. While some blurred head shots are fully visible, others contain just a shoulder, the tips of someone's hair, or the back of a person's profile while their face completely escapes capture.

I read this variation of subject visibility as symbolic of the agency that Black communities have in choosing how much they want to be read/discerned by the wider society or how much they may wish to participate in it. Although the images in some squares are only partial, the fact that each square has an equal place in the whole perhaps suggests the possibilities by which Black people might begin to relate to each other across their differences while refusing the management discourses of race (Lorde 1984, 115). In this way, "Untitled" 2017-2019 captures how Black people's contributions might go unnoticed while valorizing their worth by positioning them as integral to understandings of Black community life and survival.

Fig. 28. Installation view, Sandra Brewster: Blur, October 3, 2020 – February 13, 2021 at Optica centre d'art contemporain. Work shown: Untitled (Blur), 2017-2019, Photo-based gel transfer on archival paper, 96 @ 10x7in., Copyright © Paul Litherland.

Brewster's *Blur* also demonstrates how our complex intersections informing constructions of Black Canadianness are in constant movement.

Some individuals face each other while others look away. Their varied gazes signal both conflict togetherness, as well as the various kinds of identities that comprise Black Canadian communities. I read the several instances where the subjects barely remain in the frame as also alluding to the fact that political attempts to construct a singular unified Black community are untenable and, in fact, understandings of Black community require far more nuance. This fluidity is similarly expressed in Tiffany Lethabo King's (2019) description of home as "a changing place in the making and always in flux" for Black Canadian subjects (191). The diverse sense of *be(long)ing* displayed in "Untitled" 2017-2019, therefore, reinforces the fact that there is no monolithic way to exist as a Black Canadian and no monolithic sense of a Black Canadian community.

I find it significant to consider the implications for Black people who encounter "Untitled" 2017-2019 and ponder to what extent their physical presence might extend this matrix in 3D form. This perspective further demonstrates how Brewster's artwork engages in the principle of art as embodied history by extending those implications for wider Black Canadian communities. The choice to render this blur in black and white against a white walled background divided by white lines illuminates the ongoing realities of Black life housed within a society that privileges whiteness. It also makes explicit the ways in which Black people carve out new ways to live and thrive despite the daily constraints brought to bear against them.

Brewster's *Blur* (2019) series also invokes a non-linear relationship with time. I thus understand this series as a visual representation of Michel-Rolph Trouillot's (1995) insistence on the past as an unfixed position. I register this fluidity of time and pastness in the fact that without the concrete labels attributed to each blur, there would be no way of telling exactly when these photos were taken.

I read this underlying temporal obscureness as symbolic of the fact that what makes Black Canadian experiences possible here and now is a direct result of the tremendous investments made by prior generations of Black Canadians who came before us. These investments do not only refer to interventions made by iconic Black peoples in Canada, such as Olivier Le Jeune, Marie-Joseph Angélique, Jean Augustine, Donovan Bailey, Michelle Ross, Viola Desmond or Oscar Peterson. Past investments in Black communities include the everyday acts of care necessary for our survival through our babysitters, janitors, grocery store clerks, and many others who typically go unnoticed, overlooked, and unnamed.[23] Despite not being able to name each person in "Untitled" 2018-2019, or concretely gather what their individual contributions to wider society might (have) be(en), they each play a pivotal role in the overall piece. The varied ways that not only this blur but the entire series straddles time in uneven and layered ways are symbolic of the intersecting links between the pasts, presents, and futures of Black Canada.

Additional complex renderings of Black life in Canada appear in "Untitled" 2015-2016 (fig. 29), which shows a paneled succession of repeating blurs of the same person. While viewing this piece at the Art Gallery of Ontario, I could not help but want to know the exact identity of the subject. The fact that this information not only remains unknown, but that the subject's image is so blurred we cannot recognize or know who they are, accentuates the overall role that opacity plays in Brewster's artwork, forcing the viewer to sit with not knowing. In a

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[23] In this list I draw from both long-standing Black Canadian communities and more recent Black immigrant contributions. This choice is framed with a shared awareness of Tiffany Lethabo King (2019) statement that, "[a]rriving in Canada in the 1880s, the 1950s, or in the twenty-first century, Black people rarely docked in a place they could call home" (191). I thus frame Black Canada with an understanding of prior generations that must also extend beyond first-generation Caribbean immigrants while attentive to the multilayered contributions of African descendants all of which inform second-generation Black Canadian life in nuanced ways.

discussion with Brewster at the virtual Black Studies Summer Seminar organized by Queen's University and The University of Toronto Scarborough in June 2021, she critiqued the need to express everything by emphasizing the importance of opacity in her art (Brewster and Ormsby). I suggest that Brewster's deployment of opacity signifies some of the ways in which Black Canadian women be(long) on their own terms with the agency to fashion complex self-definitions that are ever-shifting and limitless. There are, however, certain aspects of "Untitled" 2015-2016, which also invite you to discover more. Its multidimensionality allows the viewer to encounter several sides to this work. It is repetitive, yet different, as each preceding blur takes the shape of the next in its own way.

This blur reminds me of a scene in Apong's music video where she appears in a repeating profile image. Both the scene in the music video and this blur underscore the need to critique the tendency to read Blackness as one-note (or static) primarily via African American viewpoints. I read this blur then as an attempt to forge new ways of relating to each other by taking seriously the multiple ways of being that Black people embody.

The panels in "Untitled" 2015-2016 demonstrate that even individual Black Canadian experiences are multifaceted as there are several sides to a single person, some of which are not made public and are deeply personal. This complexity suggests that Black women's identities and constructions of be(long)ing are not contingent upon the legibility of others. I understand the multiple scratches and gaps on the surface of "Untitled" 2015-2016 as scars and as a representation of the fact that Black people experience grief and healing in a nonlinear process. Recognizing these spaces as scars and noting that they appear in different areas of each repeating blur, represents the realities of Black life, particularly Black interior life and the ways in which

Black women respond to the disproportionate rates of Black death in Toronto and the wider African diaspora.

Fig. 29. Installation view, Sandra Brewster: Blur, July 24, 2019 – March 29, 2020 at the Art Gallery of Ontario. Work shown: Untitled, 2015 - 2016 © Sandra Brewster and Georgia Scherman Projects.

I link Brewster's photo-based gel transfers illuminating Black women's self-definitions to Leigh Raiford's (2011) description of photography as a site of struggle where Black identities are consistently unmade and remade through critical Black memory (9). Raiford explicates how photography can shift representations of Black peoples from stereotypes which fix them as "ignorant, poor, and unfit for citizenship" and instead assert images of "worth, dignity, and self-possession" (9). Raiford's critical Black memory is illuminated through Brewster's explanation of the fluid role that memory plays in her artwork and how memory informs her understandings of Blackness:

> Blur is about movement, the past, the present, the future. It's about memory. It's about all of these things that are not fixed. It cannot be fixed. We're individuals. We have different experiences. We come from so many different places…. It's impossible to just be one. So that's my notion of Black. So, I talk about Blackness all the time but not as a one-note thing. It's something that's so layered in multitude and it's grand. I think that that way of thinking about it for me is a radical way of thinking about Blackness. (2020)

The integral role that memory plays in Brewster's artwork demonstrates the principle of embodied history at work. As a second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian woman, she is cognizant of how her intersections are informed by both Canadian and Guyanese contexts, therefore, making it impossible for her to understand Blackness as a singular experience. Black experiences as "so layered," "grand" and complex are reflected in the constant movement in this series. Brewster's continued statement on Black radical life emphasizes the various forms of movement across time and space. Her emphasis on Blackness as not a "one-note thing" relates to constructions of place and space in ways that are similar to Mark Campbell's (2012) description of Black Canadian life as heterogeneous to better acknowledge "the varieties of Black folks to an array of Afrodiasporas" (47-50). This pluralizing or blurring of Black Canadian experiences is critical Black women's and Black communities' ability to thrive, dream, and imagine new terms for their *be(long)ing*.

Brewster's reference to movement muddles time by looking to the past as a way-finding tool to navigate the future. While Blur is informative for future understandings of Black Canadian life, it is still important to note that strategies for be(long)ing in Canada already exist and are what make Brewster's artwork possible. Both the existing and future possibilities

proffered by Brewster's artwork demonstrate how photography is used to "… express a freedom to define and represent oneself as one chooses and a freedom from the ideological and material consequences of dehumanizing depictions" (Raiford 15).

In addition to these representations of resistance, I am also interested in what other ways we might read Brewster's work that prioritize everyday Blackness and do not only work toward challenging the ideological and material consequences that Raiford notes.

Brewster's "Heirloom," which displays a glass jar of ingredients used in traditional Caribbean dessert recipes, like black cake, is a prime example of the ways second-generation Caribbean women's art center quotidian experiences of Black life.[24] This installation evokes a useful conversation about audience. For a Caribbean diasporic audience, "Heirloom" would likely create a sense of familiarity, home, and nostalgia, while those unfamiliar with jars like this might be taken aback by its murky contents. "Heirloom" was actually part of Brewster's Masters' thesis exhibition entitled *A Trace | Evidence of time past* (2017) that captured everyday Black experiences in Caribbean and Canadian contexts. Brewster notes that "Heirloom" functions in similar ways as her *Token | Contemporary Ongoing* (2017) series where she collects and showcases familiar items belonging to peoples of Caribbean descent.

In her interview with me, Brewster acknowledges how regular Caribbean household objects, like a glass jar with fruits soaked in rum, evoke sentiments of "back home." Brewster further notes the importance of centering objects such as this, and more importantly, placing them on a pedestal to "value them" and create "some kind of imaginative process through that whole action" (Brewster, Art Routes). I can personally attest to having a container like this in my own kitchen which would resurface every December when either my mother or father would prepare black cake to accompany sorrel for the Christmas season.

[24] This dessert is also referred to as rum cake or fruitcake.

Black cake is a staple in Caribbean celebrations outside of Christmas holidays and also appears at birthdays, christenings, and weddings. My analysis of "Heirloom" (2017) will, therefore, demonstrate how Raiford's critical Black memory can be applied outside the context of photography.

Fig. 30. Sandra Brewster. Heirloom, dried fruit soaked in rum, glass jar, 2017.

I recall sharing a sense of disappointment with other second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian children when a cake would be cut for a special occasion. My friends and I often reminisced about having our moment of anticipation quelled after a cake was cut at a family

gathering where the interior of a black cake was revealed instead of the preferred, “regular” vanilla cake.

This shared displeasure highlights the shifting ways that cultural value is registered and expressed across generations. It is important to note, however, that the fact that a vanilla cake with buttercream frosting and/or fondant is not only preferred, but also valorized as normal should not be overlooked as just a palatal matter. The feeling of deception following the slicing of a celebratory black cake covered in royal icing, in fact, exemplifies how food becomes central to second-generation Black Caribbean Canadians’ internalized markers of difference that frame Canadian identities primarily through whiteness.

Fig. 31. Photograph of my brother’s christening cake, 1994. Copyright © Patrick Brown Sr.

In Zalika Reid-Benta’s novel, *Frying Plantain* (2019), the Canadian-born protagonist, Kara, covers her mouth to avoid screaming at the sight of a pig head in the freezer while grabbing drinks during her trip to Jamaica to visit her family (3). Alongside Kara’s Jamaican cousins’ revelations of how they strangle chickens for soup with ease, this startling experience is just one of several moments in the novel that emphasize second-generation Canadian sentiments of displacement from the Caribbean of their first-generation parents (Reid-Benta 3).

These destabilizing moments show how food complicates second-generation Black Canadian claims to not only their Canadian identities, but also their Caribbean ones, thus demanding a nuanced understanding of second-generation experiences within the context of be(long)ing. It is for these complex reasons why space to theorize Black diasporic women's being outside of nationalist frameworks must be made available to allow for broader understandings of second-generation experiences in ways that are more liberatory.

To further analyze understandings of Blackness beyond nationalist frameworks, I return to Brewster's comments in the introduction of this dissertation about her international travels to places like Trinidad. Her experiences highlight the importance of Black Canadian women artists maintaining relationships with other creatives and facilitating artistic connections abroad. Building such cultural exchanges help shape Black Canadian women artists' understandings of transnational Blackness, creative processes, and overall approach to their craft. These transnational artistic exchanges link Brewster's work to Camille Turner's. Turner, in fact, describes her invitation to the Banff Center by Jamaican digital media artist Mervin Jarman as a pivotal moment in shaping her identity as an artist:

> He was someone I really looked up to. He was someone who never forgot his roots. His work was socially engaged. His bearing was so humble and yet he was able to step into these kinds of situations where... he always thought he didn't belong. But he was a huge influence on me. We went to the Banff Centre together. He was invited to speak there and he invited me to come. I was invited as well. They were going to get me to pay for my lodgings and everything and he insisted on them inviting me and paying for me. And I've

always been so grateful for Mervin through that example and the way that he held space for me. (2020).

Jarman's willingness to hold space while advocating on Turner's behalf shows how Black artists take risks by speaking up for themselves and others. This self and community advocacy is directly in line with the role of the Black revolutionary artist Alice Walker (1983) describes.

When I think about additional examples of Black revolutionary artists who represent the voice of wider Black Canadian communities, Turner's performance of "Miss Canadiana" (2002), therefore, readily comes to mind. As Brewster herself remarks, "Camille Turner crowned herself as 'Miss Canadiana.' That for me was an ultimate thing!" (Artist's Talk). Reading Turner's performance as an "ultimate thing" highlights the important interventions that Black artists habitually make. Turner's performance also reflects the principle of embodied history as it transforms our understandings of Blackness in Canada from a specifically second-generation perspective. Brewster relishes in the possibilities made available through this artistic process: "… exactly! This is what I'm talking about. Just make yourself who you are, who you want to be with no permission. You don't need any permission to do so. And for me that is art. That's embedded within the imagination of art. Just do that. That is the radical approach" (2020). According to Brewster, staying true to self without apology or permission throughout the creative process is what makes art possible. Below, I follow Brewster's lead and continue to discuss the ability of art to spark the imagination in ways that encourage people to think Blackness otherwise through an engagement with Turner's (2002) Miss Canadiana performance.

Miss Canadiana

Fig. 32. Hometown Queen, (Re)Visions. Curated by Sally Frater, The Print Studio, Hamilton, ON, 2010. Courtesy of Camille Turner

Camille Turner's character Miss Canadiana paraded local and international streets[25] and attended other special events while dressed in a bright red gown and draped in a feathered boa. She was also occasionally wrapped in a white fur shawl or jacket, while adorned with a bejeweled necklace, matching tiara and a sash declaring her self-proclaimed title, "Miss Canadiana." Camille Turner's (2002) stately demeanor in this persona was met with quite the public reception in her several performances between 2002-2005. As she explains, "[p]eople want to be seen with me… To have their photos taken with me… For me to sign autographs… People come and they touch me; they kiss me; they hug me…" (qtd. in Mohamed 2005).

[25] She has traversed streets in countries like Australia, Jamaica, Mexico, and Senegal (Turner, "Miss Canadiana"). Miss Canadiana would also conduct walking tours of the historical Black Grange community in Toronto (Turner, "Heritage").

Her character/celebrity persona attracted significant attention whenever she would stop for photo-ops and greet "fans," hand out Canadian flags, and promote all things normatively associated with Canada, like maple syrup. Jenny Burman (2010) references "Miss Canadiana" to discuss whether or not "the subject position 'black Canadian' is still experienced and/or interpreted as one of contradiction" (106). My choice to engage with Turner's performance extends similar discussions by using "Miss Canadiana" (2002) to analyze the im/possibilities of Black Canadianness with a continued application of the concept of be(long)ing.

I first read Turner's performance as ironic. I note Turner's wide smile, for instance, in the photograph "Hometown Queen, (Re)Visions" (2010), in which she holds her self-earned tiara in place. She appears to unexpectedly pop-out of the bottom left side of the frame. Her stance perpetuates the idea that everything is all-good in Canada, even perfect perhaps. The bleak background behind her, however, indicates an entirely different story. Rather than a typical depiction of Canada with lush greenery and pristine nature, Turner's photo lays bare the impact of settler colonialism by showing the pollution that results from the occupation of stolen lands.

My analysis of her performance also considers how Turner's art paves the way for other Black Canadians to take up space by encouraging them to claim their Canadian identities unapologetically while developing ways to be(long) relationally. Uri McMillan's (2015) shares how Black women's performance art enables the "…fashioning of oneself as both the subject and object of art" (3). McMillan's subject/object understandings of performance art further highlights how Turner's use of her body as "Miss Canadiana" is a physical and metaphorical demonstration of Black women's ability to wholly claim their Canadian identities and consequently instruct other Black Canadians to do the same.

In centering the body, Turner's performance most clearly reflects the principle of embodied history as her artistic performance is representative of the overlapping histories that inform Black Canada by underscoring the legacy of Black presence in this country. The wider historical context informing this performance thus reveals how Black Canadians continue to survive and thrive despite the enduring effects of chattel slavery and settler colonialism.

This continued survival demonstrates how Black artists routinely take part in ongoing conversations regarding "… imaging and imagining blackness and Black selves otherwise, in excess of the containment of the long and brutal history of the violent annotations of Black being" (Sharpe 2016, 115). I link Turner's artistic practice as "a way to find home" to Sharpe's method of thinking Blackness otherwise (Turner 2020). I am interested in how this performance can be positioned as a useful strategy for second-generation *be(long)ing* in ways that contest feelings of out-of-placeness.

Turner's artistic search for home is distinctly identified within her coming-of-age project, "Suit of Armor," an interactive video installation created in collaboration with Nancy Paterson. My decision to revisit this project is a direct response to Turner's insistence during our interviews that, "I couldn't do all of the things that I'm doing now until I did that one. That was the thing that I needed to do at that time" (2020). The scenes recorded on this DVD highlight the competing societal viewpoints that Black Canadian women and girls confront on a regular basis. According to Turner, "[t]here's so many competing narratives and scripts and so many expectations. Finding my way through all of that. We all have to do that somehow as Black women and Black girls growing up in this country… And there is the media of course, and pressures within our own families.

Everything around us" (2020). "Suit of Armor," which could be considered Turner's artistic rite of passage, contained visuals of a young Black girl looking at several images of white women in mainstream magazines like *Vogue* and clips from racist films like *Gone with the Wind.* It uses these media references to provide a critique of whiteness while sharing Black peoples' experiences in Canada from a gendered lens.

Turner discloses that some community responses to this earlier work contained feelings of surprise and shock in relation to Black Canadian girls' perspectives (2020). Katherine McKittrick (2007) contextualizes this element of surprise by using the history of Marie-Joseph Angélique to discuss how "unexpected" responses to Black experiences disrupt hegemonic constructions of Canada:

> Marie-Joseph Angélique invokes a number of surprises that are astonishing simply because they take place in Canada, a nation that has and is still defining its history as Euro-white, or nonblack. These surprises include, but are not limited to: black in/and Canada, black women in Canada, black resistances (to biological determinism, to racism, to sexism, to Canada and New France),
> eighteenth-century black 'feminism,' slavery in Canada, Canada as a site of permanent black residency. These people, places, events, and activities are not 'Canada,' are not supposed to be Canada, and contradict Canada; they are surprises, unexpected and concealed. (92)

Whether portraying the realities of Black Canadian women and girls from the eighteenth-century or our present day, to acknowledge their experience is to simultaneously challenge the racist logic that tries to negate their presence.

These examples also demonstrate the shared instances where second-generation Canadian experiences overlap with those from historical Black Canadian communities.

This ongoing concealment of past and present Black Canadian women's experiences is partially what fuels second-generation women's complex relationships to Canada and sustains their nuanced sentiments of *be(long)ing.* The ongoing erasure of Black presence, which routinely positions Black communities outside of the nation, consequently translates into second-generation sentiments of unbelonging from their country of birth. Heather Meikle (2013) states, "I would often hear 'You're not from here' when I told people that I was born in Toronto. So I stopped telling people where I was from. It felt awkward either way" (157). This is why she chose to self-identify as an "inbetweenie" to confront this sense of out-of-placeness while claiming her nuanced, not Canadian/not Caribbean position (Meikle 157). The awkward feeling that Meikle describes is couched in a myth of multicultural benevolence that upholds Canada as a space for all. This is further identified in Robyn Maynard's (2017) notion of "hiding in plain sight"—a metaphor for the seemingly undetectable nature of anti-Black racism in Canadian society (3). "Miss Canadiana,", however, defies this exclusionary anti-Black racist practice and offers a rereading of the complex racialized and gendered relationships to nation which I frame as a tool for second-generation *be(long)ing.*

Continuing conversations about the public reception of Turner's work using the context of "Miss Canadiana" raises important questions about what it means to be Canadian and where Black women specifically fit within that construction. Labels like "transgressive Canadianness" (Davis 2006; Crawford et al. 2012) in reference to Black Canadian populations signal an existing conception of a Canadian identity that does not necessarily include Black peoples.

These normative exclusions are why McKittrick (2002) notes the "contradictoriness of blackness within the Canadian landscape" where simultaneous processes of displacement and self-reclamation both "illustrate how the black community 'fits into,' disrupts, and experiences Canadian-ness" (31, 33). Not only does Turner use this persona to dramatize Black Canadian women's claims to a Canadian identity, but she takes this initiative even further by centering a Black woman's experience as representative of our entire national landscape by describing "Miss Canadiana" as "the guardian of all that is Canadian":

> She is the guardian of all that is Canadian. This is a public persona. People, they see their favorite movie star they think they know this person, even though they don't. But they really do believe that. So, for them, I am a public figure. I'm not a real human? In a way? So, those social barriers that usually apply, don't apply anymore. It's kind of permission to go beyond what they would normally do. (qtd. in Mohamed)

I understand this guardian role as one that assumes an immense and loaded responsibility. Actions, such as care-taking, defending, providing, and several other societal duties have been historically and contemporarily assigned to Black women in particular. As noted in earlier discussions throughout this dissertation, the inextricable link between Black women and the kinds of labour they perform are part of slavery's legacy.

In centering the role of care in all its forms, which include acts of protection and provision, I am interested in how a Black women's arts praxis might illuminate other kinds of futures where this "guardian" role is extended beyond Black women's responsibility. In the conclusion, I advocate for a wider relational politics and am attentive to the need to foster anti-oppressive communal relationships.

"Miss Canadiana" as guardian of all things Canadian, therefore, necessitates a discussion of what a self-proclaimed guardianship does to unhinge existing ideas about "legitimized" (white) Canadian identities, and the assumed positions of power that are required for one to take on such a role. While such bold claims are revolutionary and important, they are not straightforward especially when considering questions posed by M. NourbeSe Philip (2017) who asks, "[c]an one ever be/long on what is essentially stolen land? Even if not stolen by you. And if there exists no word to describe one's state or condition in relation to where one lives, is one permanently erased?" (33).

Philip's questions reveal the complex relationship between Indigenous lands and Black communities in Canada fueled by their intertwining historical and contemporary oppressions (King 2019; Maynard 2017). This photo (fig. 33) taken for the *Hamilton Spectator*, which shows Miss Canadiana leading the 2015 Culturemania cultural parade, however, suggests an entirely different narrative that masks such complexities. It is interesting to note that the name of this festival is called, "It's Your Festival," which is undoubtedly predicated on a binary logic of us vs. them demonstrating that a multicultural festival such as this could never be fully recognized as a part of the official Canadian landscape that is solely preserved to uphold whiteness. This image, with visible flags from all over the world throughout the length of the procession, while Turner walks alongside members of Indigenous communities who are dressed in traditional attire and are dancing while others play instruments, resonates with quintessential representations of Canadian multiculturalism. Turner's (2012) performance coupled with Philip's (2017) inquiry, however, allows us to take a closer look at the implications of such symbolisms by grappling with these intertwined Canadian histories.

Viviane Saleh-Hanna (2015) highlights this complex relationship by stating that, “[t]hrough European colonialism and its forced labor branch of chattel slavery, land and bodies alike were simultaneously transformed into conquered properties” (Saleh-Hanna). Acknowledging the complex and overlapping historical relationships involving land sovereignty and bodily autonomy must then account for how the dominating forces attempting to erase Black presence are predicated upon Indigenous genocide and displacement.

Fig. 33. "Miss Canadiana" Camille Turner leads the Cultural Parade as Its Your Festival kicks off at Gage Park. Photo by Kaz Novak, The Hamilton Spectator. July 10th, 2015. Courtesy of Camille Turner.

One should note the varied representations from the Caribbean in this image. There are flags from Barbados and Trinidad as well as Black women dressed in their traditional garb, like the Jamaican bandana. Their presence further highlights the close relationship between Canada and the Caribbean which consistently informs second-generation be(long)ing. That Turner is dressed as a representation of Canada, and not Jamaica, does important work of showing the self-determined ways that second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women choose to be(long) by carving out their own paths and identities.

I view the nuanced terminology of this performance that is titled "Miss Canadiana" rather than "Miss Canada" as exemplary of Turner's careful attention to these complicated legacies of historical violence and her choice to develop ways to be(long) relationally. This difference demonstrates how one might consciously respond to a sense of a social responsibility which requires an awareness of how one occupies space.

It is also important to note how the societal questioning of Miss Canadiana's humanity is possible simply because she is a Black woman. This distanced affiliation to and/or negation of humanity also facilitates an assumed sense of Turner's approachability as a celebrity and thus permits a false sense of direct access to her. Turner describes what this access looks like by mentioning that what makes "Miss Canadiana" (2002) possible is the fact that her performance relies on Canadian society's general understanding of social relations and unquestioned norms:

> This piece works because people are used to reading the surfaces of things. The outside…The symbols… That's what people respond to. They're not really looking beyond that at all. I'm playing on the whole construct of the beauty queen, as well, so there's expectations to come from that package, you know? Miss Canadiana is this, this kind of hyper-feminized version of beauty, but then, there's this kind of virginal thing that happens too because she's typically this young girl that you project all your desires onto, but then she's untouchable, so then there's a lot of things going on there. (qtd. in Mohamed 2005)

This assumed societal access, along with the mention of a societal projection of desires onto this character really struck me particularly when read alongside specified characteristics like "untouchable" and "virginal."

My reaction is primarily in response to how normative gendered and racialized constructions reserve these tropes for white women while simultaneously positioning Black women in opposing ways. Patricia Hill Collins (2000) explains these views by explaining how Black women stereotypes, like the Jezebel, make notions of pure white womanhood possible (132). These self-described experiences of Turner's performance, therefore, offer a complex reading of how the wider intersections of race and gender operate outside the realm of performance art. In outlining the wider implications of this performance, it is worth investigating the extent to which such translations of immediate access and barriers apply to everyday Black Canadian women and girls.

This discussion of barriers and access takes me back to several vulnerable moments during my interviews when participating artists either divulged having experienced trauma related to being sexually assaulted or expressed a covert awareness of that ongoing threat/probability. Sexual violence becomes a common experience through the societal preservation of racism, sexism and patriarchy in ways that frequently place Black Canadian women and girls in harm's way. I draw these comparisons in relation to Turner's performance not to perpetuate hypersexualized constructions of Black women and girls, but to instead demonstrate how these preexisting notions concerning barriers and access translate into everyday experiences of Black women and girls in often dangerous ways. McKittrick (2007) talks about how expressing Blackness and Black femininity ultimately has direct implications for public understandings of gender and race (140). Meanwhile, Maynard (2017) shares that the mere presence of a Black woman's body in public is sexualized (138).

Discussions of Turner's (2002) performance must, therefore, consider how Black women's lives are "defined by intersecting conditions of subjection, invisibility, and disposability" while being continuously perpetrated through forms of intimate and state violence (Maynard 129). Toni Irving (2007) also shares how sexual access to Black women's bodies reflect a long history of white male power (88). This power dynamic is further outlined in the ongoing legacy of patriarchal violence explained by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991), where she notes that the rendering of Black women as "bad women" helps to uphold "cultural narratives about good women who can be raped and bad women who cannot" (1271). As a result of how gender-based forms of sexual violence remain grounded in racism, capitalism, homo/trans/bi-phobia, and patriarchy, societal understandings of barriers, access, and consent, become obscured in the context of Black Canadian women by defining who is "good vs. bad" and/or ultimately worthy of protection.

Research indicates that African American women are "…one of the most vulnerable groups when it comes to sexual victimization, which includes incest, rape, sexual coercion, and childhood sexual abuse" (Slatton and Richard 2). However, as Canadian researchers have pointed out, race-based statistics reflecting Canadian realities have yet to be adequately explored (MacDougall 2020; Maynard 2017; Jones 2017; Ngangura 2017). This lack of institutional effort to conduct studies in Canada is what in part makes it impossible for Black Canadian girls to grow up feeling protected. Gender-based violence will continue to be underestimated and remain unaddressed if these research gaps are not attended to. The inadequate research on sexual violence and trauma will continue to facilitate the detrimental realities faced by Black Canadian women and girls as this lack of research is directly tied to their inability to gain appropriate access to care.

In response to this systematic neglect and uniquely oppressed position, Black Canadian women organizers continue to provide community-based solutions to address gendered and state violence that center anti-racist, queer and trans-affirming, feminist, and class- conscious alternatives (Maynard 157).

Despite Black women's experiences, it is nonetheless extremely important to remember that there is always more to the experiences of Black Canadian womanhood and girlhood that ought not to remain overshadowed by the trauma of violence. As a way to contend with the full complexity of Black Canadian women's experiences through "Miss Canadiana" (2002), I deploy this generative question that McMillian (2015) offers: "What happens, I ask, if we reimagine black objecthood as a way toward agency rather than its antithesis, as a strategy rather than simply a primal site of injury?" (9). Brewster's story about "Miss Canadiana's" transformational capacity highlights precisely these moments where agency becomes apparent:

> I remember a story once, when I think it was a talk that she had where she talked about going to Nova Scotia. I think she was in Preston. And she was Miss Canadiana, and she was presenting. I think it was the time when it was exposed that she's not so-called, "actually" Miss Canadiana, but she was this performance artist. That's why I said crowned herself, because whenever I say that, I'm immediately connecting to that experience that she had expressed. So, she said at one point this person in the audience says, "Wait a minute. You're not really Miss Canadiana?" And she goes, "Oh no, this is a performance…blah blah." And then the person says, "You mean, we can do that too?" and she says, "Yes." I was floored. (2020)

That Brewster was floored, in addition to the audience member's breakthrough revelation in response to Turner's performance, shows how performance-based methodologies alter understandings of Black subjectivity and be(long)ing (McMillan 9). This story told by Brewster also shows how Black Canadian women artists are actively engaged in each other's artwork and are supportive in ways that inspire people both within and outside of artistic spaces.[26]

"Miss Canadiana's" ability to inspire continues through the following words of advice she provides to Black Canadian women and girls: "Embrace who you are, know who you are. Embrace your own beauty. That was one thing that I loved about Miss Canadiana. I loved looking at the faces of Black women. When they see Miss Canadiana, they're seeing themselves. I love that. It fed me. I just see this one gesture of, here we are!" (Turner 2020). This collective gesture of "here we are," shows how Turner's (2020) performance is used to "assert claims to social space" (McMillan 12). This claiming of space is what then makes it possible for a fictional character to evoke material implications and why some believe that "Miss Canadiana" (2002) is, in fact, real. These selected images where Turner greets fans and poses for photo ops help visualize Turner's statement that, "[o]f course she's real. People create her. People legitimize her. Camera crews follow her around. People want a piece of her. There are hundreds of people across the world right now with a photograph of themselves with Miss Canadiana, or with her autograph" (qtd. in Mohamed 2005). Whether real or fake, what holds true is how normative constructions of Canadianness become undone through this performance.

[26] Black Canadian women artist support also comes in other forms which includes the role art critics, or who Joana Joachim (2020) identifies as "caretakers of art" who make Black artists and their artwork visible by documenting and therefore preserving Black Canadian histories (Joachim).

Fig. 34. "Miss Canadiana" appearance via Broken Hill Art Exchange in Broken Hill Australia, 2007. Courtesy of Camille Turner.

Fig. 35. "Miss Canadiana" does the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF), with Camal Pirbhai, Toronto, ON, 2012. Courtesy of Camille Turner.

This undoing provides Black Canadian women and girls the room to be(long) and self-define what it means to be "as Canadian as possible" just as the poster above indicates.
In addition to challenging racist depictions of Black women on maple syrup products through the caricature of Aunt Jemima, I want to further draw attention to the RCMP who lurk in the background of this image. This photograph blatantly displays the ways in which Black Canadian communities are routinely subject to threats of police violence. Given that this performance took place fifteen years ago, we must acknowledge what it would have meant for Turner to be publicly speaking out against whiteness in Canada during that time. The lurking presence of the RCMP further illuminate the fact that creating art as a Black woman is not easy and requires tremendous courage, as well as coming to terms with the fact that one might have to put one's self in harm's way to make the important changes our communities deserve.

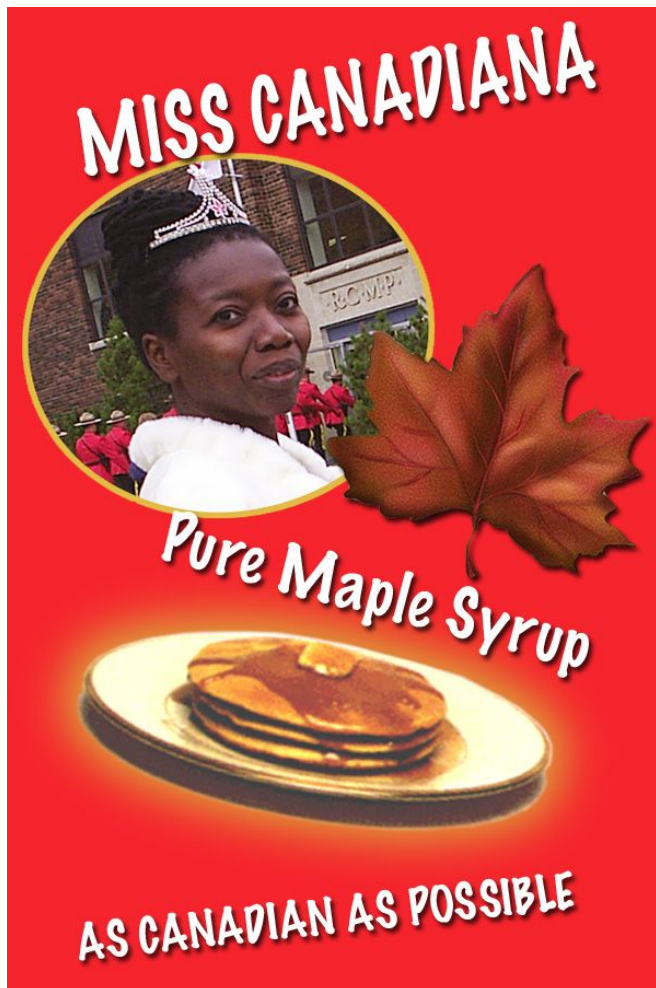

Fig. 36. Sugar Shack , 21 Group Exhibition, Curated by Elwood Jimmy, Dunlop Gallery, Regina, SK, 2007. Courtesy of Camille Turner.

Turner further reflects on the fact that this sense of courage was not readily available to her while growing up:

> I feel like there are so many more choices now. I see Black women choosing their own sexuality. Choosing their own way of identifying themselves. Choosing their own gender. I love the ways that people are embracing new identities/new realities. Breaking out of a box, deciding for themselves who they are. Or who they're not. I love the way that people are going beyond the scripts, writing new scripts. I think there are still the pressures, but I just think that because there are people defying what is expected, it just gives young Black girls different choices. Choices that I didn't feel that I had.

I applaud that, and people who have the courage to redefine themselves. (2020)

Turner's experiences signify how the arts become central for generative changes in how Black Canadian women and girls understand themselves. This passage also demonstrates how Turner became the change that she needed to see for herself and that subsequently had a ripple effect within wider Black communities.

Her choice not only illuminates the principle of art as embodied history, but also art as self-love and demonstrates how Black Canadian experiences are understood and imagined outside of the anti-Black confines of white supremacy, patriarchy, and capitalism while Black women continuously invent new strategies of *be(long)ing.* Turner's acknowledgement of existing pressures also clarifies that more work needs to be done to move toward Black freedom. The next section, which outlines my own artwork, exemplifies my own personal contributions that add to second-generation discourses of *be(long)ing* and methods for Black liberation.

Bob Marley's "Waiting in Vain" – "Soulified"

From my classical piano training which started at the age of five, to my brother BJ's ongoing piano lessons, relatively quiet moments in my household are always hard to come by. In fact, for as long as I can remember, music has provided a soundtrack to my everyday life. From singing in school choirs, teaching myself how to play the guitar, playing the clarinet, blasting lovers rock music while cleaning the house on Saturdays, listening to local radio shows like Richard Banton's "Radio Dubplate" on VIBE 105.5 FM (formerly known as CHRY), singing hymns while in my church congregation, or being introduced to various genres from my father's extensive collection of cassette tapes, I was/am constantly surrounded by music.

The songs my dad played would often be interrupted by stories about him growing up in Spanish Town, Jamaica. For example, while Bob Marley's Exodus album was playing in the background, he once revealed that his mother, Aileen Dobson, did not allow the playing of secular music in her home: "Reggae was a nono. And no Bob Marley either. But just like you tell the child don't dial 911 unless it's an emergency… What does the child do? Dial 911…" He then proceeded to sing the chorus to Marley's "Natural Mystic." It is through occasional asides like this that I began cultivating an awareness that there was much more to music than just what we hear. I thus read my "soulified" cover of Bob Marley's "Waiting in Vain" (2016) in relation to the principle of art as embodied history to consider how my differential relationship to Black genres inform not only my music-making practice but also my wider understandings of myself as a second-generation Jamaican-Canadian Black woman. I suggest that this song demonstrates a sonic methodology for second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women's be(long)ing.

I coined the term "soulified" to identify the (neo)soul-esque sounds I typically create from songs originally recorded in other genres, primarily, but not limited to reggae. My soulified version of Marley's "Waiting in Vain" was inspired by other Black women musicians who have also done covers of Marley's music, using R&B, soul, and acoustic styles, such as Corinne Bailey Rae and Andy Allo.[27] Black music-making processes of borrowing, transforming, and creating relational Afrodiasporic cultural exchanges provide a useful foundation to ground this specifically second-generation sonic discourse. My ongoing relationship to reggae and other Black genres outlines how "Black musics have remixed the modalities of the state in order to foster alternative exercises and experiences of freedom and justice" (Redmond 4).

[27] In addition to Marley, I have also done soulified covers of songs by other reggae artists such as Dennis Brown and Chronixx.

My reggae inspired "soulified" music further exemplifies this remixing of state modalities and provides a nuanced articulation of the African diaspora while offering insight into the hybrid relationships second-generation Black women maintain with Canada and the Caribbean.

My relationship to Jamaica and sense of "Jamaicanness" may be due to the ever-proud or "boasie" mentality that many Jamaicans have for all things Jamaican, or a result of the ways in which Canadian multiculturalism forces an ongoing dedication to nationalist silos. Perhaps, it is because of the globalizing processes that increasingly commodify Black music, or a mix of all of the above why cultural icon, Bob Marley, significantly influences my Jamaican-Canadian identity. Marley, the first true global pop icon (Gilroy 238), was and continues to be instrumental in catapulting the Jamaican cultural production of reggae worldwide as demonstrated in the lyrics of Chronixx's "Likes" (2017) which state, "…Marley still ah lead pon iTunes" (Chronixx). Marley's ongoing legacy entails "universal" ideologies concerning radical social change that span boundaries of race, class, and gender while being grounded in an Afrocentric aesthetic (Cooper 1995).

Paul Gilroy (2005) similarly outlines Marley's "hybridity" by describing him as a "… clever translator articulating the disarmingly intelligent voices of the poor and the wretched in a tongue that the more privileged could not fail to comprehend. This cosmopolitan pattern altered the fields of political force around national states and national cultures" (223). Contrary to Grandma Dobson's Christian- influenced anxiety, Marley's influential impact on my life was facilitated by the sounds of him alongside the Wailers and their lyrics promoting Rastafarian beliefs and a Pan-African consciousness.

Their music and lyrics show how Black arts and, in this specific case, Black music, is able to (re)imagine and (re)construct Blackness in ways that operate outside limiting stereotypes that subject Black peoples to the threat of violence every day.

In this photograph (fig. 37), I can be seen sitting on the steps of 56 Hope Road in Kingston, Jamaica, where Bob Marley once lived. My posture demonstrates my sense of feeling right at home, rather than as a guest or tourist, and is informed by the significance Marley has played in my understanding of self as a second-generation Jamaican-Canadian. The symmetrical components of this image as reflected in the crosses on each door, plants on either side, and bright yellow columns evoke the scenery of a temple of sorts which might render my visit to Kingston as a form of spiritual pilgrimage. One might also note my Afro hairstyle with pointed tips on the ends that gesture toward my incoming dreadlocks that soon followed.

Fig. 37. Photograph of me outside of Bob Marley's house in Kingston, Jamaica, 2016. Copyright © Anneisha Facey.

While reggae music is often constructed as synonymous with "Jamaicanness," this view is essentialist. Thus, the impact of this genre on my Jamaican identity is not straightforward. For example, much like Apong's earlier reservations about her ability to make a soca song, I too share the same opinion in regards to whether or not I could make a reggae track.
While our viewpoints are quite possibly cases of imposter syndrome,[28] I revisit this example to think through how this self-described second-generation inability to operate easily within Caribbean genres is indicative of wider complex relationships to nation as reflected in the artwork analyzed in this chapter.

When I am forced to confront oft-posed questions, such as, "where are you from?" or "what's your background?" I usually provide vague replies such as "earth" and/or "my mother", especially if they are posed by white people. Although I primarily identify as a Jamaican-Canadian, my evasive response is due to underlying issues regarding the problematic construction of Canada as a white space that necessitates and normalizes this inquiry. My unique second-generation experience, however, simultaneously facilitates a complex in/ability to fully claim either my Jamaican and/or Canadian identities.

Brianna Roye shares similar experiences, describing how "weird" it is being in Toronto where she feels "too Canadian" for her family while she is assumed to be Jamaican when she navigates Canadian society outside of her home (2020). Brewster similarly shares that she called herself Guyanese while growing up since she felt that it was "more interesting to say" she was Guyanese, rather than Canadian (2020). While this self-constructed "interesting" Caribbean background was mainly fueled by her parents' nostalgia, she importantly links this larger discussion of her background to societal understandings of who is normatively read as Canadian:

[28] This deduction is more than likely especially when made in comparison to culturally appropriating artists such as Snow, or even Joss Stone who ironically won Billboard's award for reggae artist of year in 2015.

> It's interesting that this question always comes up with us. Like why can't it just be assumed that we are Canadian? And our background, how we grew up, who we are, is just a part of the fabric of Canada. We're always having to explain how we identify. And then always have to look at that. There are other people who never have to do that. It's just assumed that they are here and this is their home. But we're always having to assess all of those things. (Brewster 2020)

This challenging self-assessment is reflected in the participating artists' biographies outlined in the introduction and reflects their complex understanding of what it means to exist as Black women/people in a white dominated society that dictates who belongs and who does not. Our muddled self-identifications are also fueled by the same oppressive driving forces that made Heather Meikle's "inbetweenie" status possible and make it difficult to neatly pinpoint where nationalist constructs fit in. Karen Flynn and Evelyn Marrast (2008) similarly use Black artists to describe complex second-generation identities and share that they define themselves according to their own experiences of living in Canada rather than their parents' homeland (4). In response to our complicated and at times even conflicting second-generation sense of "Canadianness" and "Caribbeanness," I posit my "soulified" versions of reggae music as an arts-based strategy for be(long)ing by exemplifying how I hold my nuanced identities altogether.

McKittrick (2007) describes the capacity for Black music and music-making to overturn Black Canadian erasure (101). Second-generation Black Canadian women's music-making is thus an imperative for the solidification of their realities in a continued effort to highlight the "…material locations of blackness and black communities" (101). Examples of these material locations are shown through the ability for my soulified music to perform as a sonic method to claim both my Jamaican and Canadian identities.

By positioning soulified remixes as a distinctly second-generation articulation, these claims offer new and important ways of understanding Black being in Canada while expanding notions of the "Jamaicanization" of Black music (Ashbourne 2012).

Peter Ashbourne (2012) defines "Jamaicanization" as processes where musicians and singers both consciously and subconsciously use elements of their own experiences to add, replace, change and augment music originally made by someone else (40). He concretely locates the emergence of "Jamaicanization" in the late 1950s and outlines its development as a gradual process from the preceding genres of mento and ska which eventually led to the establishment of reggae as we know it (40). The impact of these "Jamaicanized" cover songs is exemplified in Sandra Brewster's exclamation, "[i]t's about time!" in response to my music while laughing at the tendency for Jamaican artists to do cover songs (2020).

As a second-generation Jamaican-Canadian, I position my "soulified" music as my own form of Ashbourne's described "Jamaicanization," as the sonic processes of adding, shifting and replacing according to my own experience fittingly applies to my version of Marley's "Waiting in Vain." This soulified version offers new and nuanced understandings of second-generation identities, exemplifying how "artists produce new cultural forms that acknowledge the specificity of their unique subject position as black Canadians" (Flynn and Marrast 2008, 4). This second-generation "Jamaicanization" also facilitates what Flynn and Marrast outline as an unapologetic self-insertion within the Canadian performance landscape while claiming space to redefine Black Canadian identities in ways that are "contested, contradictory but transgressive and counterhegemonic" (5–6).

Although "Waiting in Vain – Soulified" is not classified as a reggae song, it is still important to note the significant impact of reggae on the Canadian landscape which in part makes my performance possible. Klive Walker (2012) outlines reggae's impact on Canada by describing the importance of Bob Marley's performances in Toronto dating back to the mid-seventies:

> No overview of reggae in Canada can ignore the enormous impact of Bob Marley and the Wailers, particularly when that band was at the height of its worldwide, mainstream popularity in the late 1970s. At first, Marley restricted his Canadian tour dates to Toronto. His first performance was at Massey Hall in June 1975 and a year later in May 1976, he brought his exhilarating reggae showcase to the University of Toronto's Convocation Hall. (186)

Through Marley's legendary performances signifying that "[a]nother world is possible" (Gilroy 2005, 243), along with music by other artists, such as, Leroy Sibbles and Nana McLean, a sonic tradition of reggae music was concretized in Canada. These previous generations paved the way for contemporary Black Canadian reggae artists today, such as, Ammoye, Blessed, Chelsea Stewart, and Exco Levi. Reggae has also established Jamaican culture in Canada through other contexts, such as community festivals and events in Toronto like Jambana or Jamaica Day, as well as, events outside of Ontario, like reggae festivals which take place in cities like Calgary and Montreal. Since my performances are primarily posted online via social media, my music highlights how Black artists also maintain virtual contributions to Caribbean Canadian sonic cultures.

Making such artistic creations pubic online reflect the principle of art as embodied history by illuminating my internalized self-constructions and expressing them outwardly.

I was in my mid-twenties during this time which serves as a crucial and formative period where young Black women often negotiate new understandings self. As a classically trained pianist, my soulified cover certainly does contain some classical elements; however, my second-generation process of "Jamaicanization" indicates where I break away from that formal training and create something new instead. In breaking from my formal piano training, I speak back to additional sentiments of unbelonging where I would often be the only Black musician in performance halls which often made me question my place, ability and worth. My soulified performance can then be understood as a public refusal of those feelings of out-of-placeness that were fuelled by white supremacy and claiming my respective place without asking for anyone's permission.

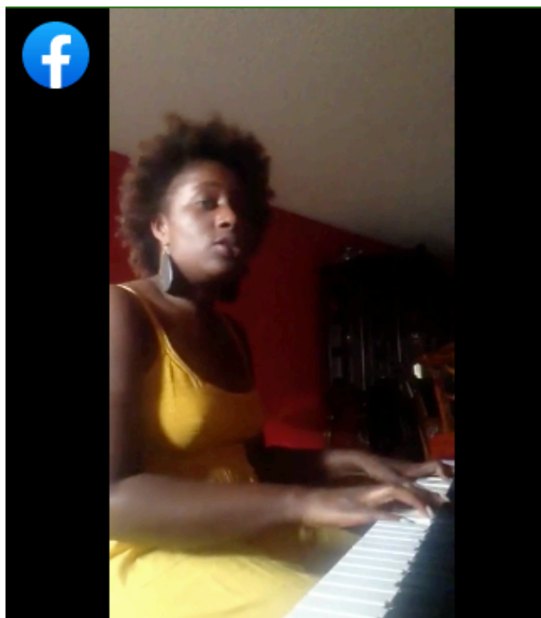

Fig. 38. A screenshot of my online performance.
"a nex bob one. soulified.…", Facebook, 2016.

These sonic gestures exemplify Mark Campbell's (2014) notion of "Afrosonic innovation" which is specifically grounded in a Black Caribbean Canadian experience and thus useful for contextualizing the implications of my performance in relation to second-generation Canadian be(long)ing.

These artistic narratives offer varied understandings of being human through “a variety of positionalities” and articulate Black Canada in fluid ways that provide space for us to (re)imagine second-generation Black Canadian being according to our own terms (Cambpell 103). Understanding my soulified version within this afrosonic innovative context illuminates interesting perspectives about how racialized performances of gender operate in wider discourses about love.

While Carolyn Cooper (1995) notes that the original Marley song suggests that “the dilatory woman is functioning somewhat like a whore” with the Rastaman subtly and rather impatiently negotiating his turn (128), my remix certainly does not translate in the same way. Arguably a sense of impatience for the lover who never shows up, indeed overlaps; however, my subversion of the song’s gender dynamics alters the power relationships expressed in the song. By replacing the word “girl” with the word “boy” in the line, “…ooh boy, is it feasible? I wanna know now, for I to knock some more,” for example, I challenge the song’s gendered implication of Black women’s infidelity (Brown, “Facebook”). Heteronomative constructions of Black masculinity are often defined by sexual prowess as a response to Black men’s lack of access to economic and political power postslavery (Davis 2006; Hill Collins 2000). Regardless of the extent to which a man has “a long line of lovers in attendance” as my soulified version implies, he is not labelled and/or criticized in the same ways a woman would be as demonstrated in Cooper’s (1995) analysis.

Additional perspectives on love and succumbing to one’s impatience spark further inquiries about other forms of love signalled in my performance. These questions are borrowed from Quashie (2012) who encourages us to ask ourselves, “[w]hat do I love? What brings me joy? What and how do I feel or want to feel?” (67).

Answering the last question about how I want to feel provides an opportunity to return to previous conversations about my second-generation Canadian positionality in new ways. These innovative views reflect "processes of self-making and self-love that can answer and perhaps reverse the damage done by racism" by positioning Marley's refusal to wait as a rejection of the desire for acceptance into a settler-colonial state (Gilroy 2005, 241). This performance grounds me as part of the Canadian landscape without apology and defines my second-generation personhood by my own standards. This standard is, of course, one that is inherently relational and I remain cognizant of the fact that my be(long)ing cannot be grounded in the oppression of someone else.

The simultaneous rejection and positing of new identity assertions further solidify how this unique space of be(long)ing operates within a second-generation Caribbean Canadian experience. This be(long)ing mirrors Marley's promotion of a Black diasporic identity that is "not just African" (Gilroy 2005, 241) by using music as a form of border crossing that reinscribes and redefines hybridized Black identities via Canada (Flynn and Marrast 2008, 4). Unapologetically claiming Blackness in Canada through this song similarly highlights Redmond's notion of the "sound franchise" where music is deployed as a mechanism to announce Black presence, collectivity, and solidarity in ways that challenge white supremacist silence (Redmond 2013, 4–5).

Conclusion

In exploring Black women's performance art, music, photo-based visual art and other creative installations, this chapter uses the principle of embodied history to outline various second-generation expressions of *be(long)ing*.

My nuanced framework of *be(long)ing* outlines new relationships to geography that, "push narratives of normalcy out of the comfort zone" and redefine the limits of normative Canadian identities (McKittrick 2006, 140). My artwork, along with that of Sandra Brewster and Camille Turner, offer important strategies for how Black Canadians can (re)define themselves as part of the wider Canadian landscape regardless of the systemic and institutional mechanisms that negate Black presence.

Brewster's Blur (2019) series and "Heirloom" (2017) installation suggest the importance of recognizing constructions of Blackness in a multiplicity that is necessarily diasporic and fluid. Her representations of Blackness reflect everyday Black Canadian experiences that are not necessarily speaking back to whiteness and, therefore, answer Quashie's inquiry about how Black life can be represented without being "trapped by the expectation of resistance," by thoroughly engaging "the agency of the inner life" (55). Similarly, Camille Turner's "Miss Canadiana" (2002) performances completely upend normative constructions of Canadian identities by showing alternative possibilities for wider understandings of Canada as a whole that are specifically grounded in a Black woman's perspective. In placing this radically political stance in response to ongoing second-generation Black Canadian sentiments of unbelonging in Canada, Turner's performance exemplifies how Black women's art doubles as a form of medicine that provides healing and self-reclamation while humanizing the world with the "gift" that is Black cultural expression (Philip 2017, 24).

My sonic claims to the Jamaican diaspora through "Waiting in Vain" – Soulified" extends positions of be(long)ing outside the context of Canada by also offering new possibilities for building second-generation relationships to the Caribbean.

These sonic relationships demonstrate how Black women artists "compose an alternative politics and repertoire of belonging" that may or may not be defined according to nationalist ideals, camaraderie and/or affiliation (Redmond 2013, 6).[29] Overall, by creating artwork "that is made from within who [we] are" (Brewster 2020), this chapter makes undeniable the continued legacy of historical Black Canadian presence which propel our ability to self-fashion creative futures for ourselves and our wider communities.

[29] Redmond (2013) articulates this "repertoire of belonging" specifically within the context of Black anthems (6). This dissertation however maintains a broad view of what constitutes anthems and includes the personal relationships Black peoples maintain with sound regardless of popularity. For example, when Black people excitingly react to a song by saying "That's my song/jam/shit!" that too, is an anthem.

CONCLUSION - SECOND-GENERATION BLACK WOMEN OF CARIBBEAN DESCENT CREATING A DIFFERENT KIND OF "CANADIAN/NESS"

But this is not the end of the story, for all the young women – our mothers and grandmothers, ourselves – have not perished in the wilderness.

– Alice Walker, In Search of our Mothers' Gardens

We lean into our artistic sensibilities with intentionality, ensuring there is space for the injection of art into our construction of our future.

– Rodney Diverlus, Sandy Hudson, and Syrus Marcus Ware, Until We Are Free

Alice Walker's (1983) statement and the words by Black Lives Matter Toronto's (BLMTO) cofounders and core team members encapsulate the existing stakes and future continuities of this dissertation. Walker shares that Black women's stories persist not only through their foremothers but also in their own lives, propelling the womanist understanding of Black women as artists who creatively fashion new ways to exist in the everyday. BLMTO echoes the idea that to create as a Black person ultimately concerns matters of life and death by reminding us that the kinds of futures we aspire to create are dependent on our intentional art-making practices. Creating space for the arts is, thus, necessary for Black Canadian communities to survive and thrive. As I have illustrated in this dissertation, the intentional artistic stories conveyed by Kamilah Apong, Sandra Brewster, Shaunasea Brown, Anique Jordan, Brianna Roye, Camille Turner, and Shi Wisdom demonstrate how second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women's artwork marks not an end, but a beginning.

This starting point is one where our second-generation perspectives register new ways of being in Canada and show how Black women artists carve their own places to thrive reflecting the first principle of Black women's arts praxis I introduced in the first chapter—Art as survival practice.

These artistic contributions on a whole demonstrate how second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women artists self-define notions of "Canadianness" by claiming space for themselves in Canada. Wider societal implications, however, reveal an underlying conundrum about the extent to which processes of claiming space coincide with the violence of settler-colonialism. I am, therefore, deeply interested in investigating whether or not it is possible to claim space in ways that do not simultaneously reinforce the historical and contemporary erasure of Indigenous and long-standing Black Canadian presences that were established long before the arrival of our migrant families. This concluding chapter centers second- generation Black women artists' experiences to reject the project of Canadian multiculturalism and instead (re)articulate Black being in Canada in ways that emphasize reciprocal be(long)ing and community care.[30]

Home Relationship Status: It's Complicated – Black Women alternatives to Canadian Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism can be understood as a complex "moving target" with ever-transforming goals of preserving cultural identities and maintaining Canada's renowned reputation for inclusion as "positive and desirable" (Leung 2015; Mielusel and Pruteanu 2020; Saloojee 2004). Canada must, however, contend with its foundation of multiculturalism which routinely promotes buzzwords like equity, diversity, and inclusion while continuing to perpetuate state violence.

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[30] I have defined this notion of communal care elsewhere by drawing from Tina Campt, Jennifer C. Nash, Christina Sharpe, and other Black women feminists, womanists, and artists who innovate ways to enact and demand care for themselves and their wider communities. This care firstly attends to "the fundamental question of how one might be infringing upon someone else's freedom," while actively addressing those uneven relationships to power we embody that we might all live freely (Brown 2022).

Although multiculturalism lies at "the heart of Canada's nation-building project" (Salooojee 2004, 420), Canada continuously fails to "dislodge the power and privilege of the white majority" (Saloojee 2004, 418). Himani Bannerji (2000) outlines concepts of difference and/or diversity as an ideology which leave little room to interrogate social relations of power and mask Canada's capitalist underpinnings and histories of slavery and colonialism (50–55). This national multicultural project is, therefore, responsible for perpetuating the myth that Black presence in Canada is recent (Davis 2006), while Black communities and other racialized communities "focus on their cultural differences and not on issues of systemic racial discrimination and exclusion in society" (Saloojee 2004, 412). By paying attention to the different kinds of "Canadianness" offered by this dissertation's second-generation lens, I suggest that Black people's unique positions have the potential to challenge the Canadian status quo that remains contingent on the multiple erasures fueled by the project of multiculturalism. I, therefore, center Black women's experiences as strategies to address this multicultural failure and create the necessary spaces for not only Black women and their communities to thrive, but also everyone occupying space on this land.

These Black women-led alternatives to Canadian multiculturalism are sustained by Rinaldo Walcott's (2001) description of Black diasporic belonging as "a project of ethical political positionality" (133). Walcott's concept of ethical political positionality offers useful solutions to the issue of differentiating second-generation methods of claiming space in Canada from the violent mechanisms linked to settler colonialism. As Alice Walker's (1983) early definition of the term womanist indicates, womanism is transnational and includes not only Black feminists but also other feminists of colour in order to promote a trajectory toward liberation that functions beyond and across racial lines (xi).

By borrowing from both Walker and Walcott, this dissertation concludes by thinking through Black women's relationships to Canada as "home" to highlight their alternatives to Canadian multiculturalism in practice. Here I center second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women to explore the ways in which their lived experiences have continuously addressed the omissions that ground multicultural frameworks while offering useful methods to genuinely build coalitionist-based communities of care rather than allyship.[31]

With my critiques and expansions of Alice Walker's womanist thought provided throughout this dissertation in mind, I am interested in what new possibilities are created when the initial multiculturalist frame of reference shifts from nationalist and/or ethnic standpoints to the centering of fluid gender categories as a starting point for intersectional community-building efforts in Canada. This conceptual shift can address the numerous failures of existing multicultural ideals by paying attention to how societal power relations remain influenced by the legacies of colonialism and slavery which sustain a white supremacist hetereopatriarchal status quo. Tina Campt (2020) sheds light on how this awareness might function through her concept of "adjacency" which brings to the forefront the imperativeness and inevitability of one being uncomfortable as they undergo the processes necessary to effectively eradicate the devaluation of Black and Indigenous lives. This alternative approach thus reflects processes of Black liberation that are "tangibly connected to Indigenous struggles for land and bodily sovereignty" (Maynard 2017, 334).

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[31] I remain critical about how the label of ally is projected and/or self-prescribed as it tends to be motivated by one's threatened self-interests and steeped in Eurocentrism and whiteness (hooks, 1994; Lee 2016). Allyship also promotes a "false notion of having 'achieved' a status that does not invite continued questioning and constant un-settling" (Kluttz et al. 2020, 53). The increasing use of this label also facilitates a cultural sense of reward for attempts at mitigating societal privilege rather than simply recognizing such initiatives as one's individual social responsibility to humanity.

The second-generation experiences discussed in this dissertation exemplify new tools for constructions of (Black) "Canadianness" in ways that reassess national boundaries and citizenship and call borders into question (Campbell 2012; King 2019; Walcott 2001). These new tools are made possible in the insight provided by the artists and artwork discussed in this dissertation, as well as the principles of Black women's arts praxis I have developed. These four principles—art as survival practice, art as self-love, art as radical care ethics, and art as embodied history— reveal the unique ways second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women (re)imagine possibilities of being human while creating their own kinds of freedom —*but not at the expense of anyone else's.*

My analysis of Black women's creations in relation to the principle of art as a radical care ethic in the second chapter used the photography and music of Shi Wisdom and Anique Jordan to reveal the gendered implications of community violence and policing. My thoughts on "Young Gunner" and *Ban' Yuh Belly* acknowledge how both their artistic texts highlight the ongoing ripple effects of the disproportionate rates of Black death in Toronto, while uncovering the seemingly undetectable and "quiet" methods that Black communities use to cope with grief (Quashie 2012). In following Christina Sharpe's (2016) insistence that we do not privilege Black death over life, the principle of art as radical care relies on a wake-work methodology to illuminate Black community strategies of survival even in the face of ongoing death.

In chapter three, I continue my examination of second-generation Black women's art-making through the work of Kamilah Apong and Brianna Roye who also use the mediums of music and photography to reshape our Canadian landscape via Black queer and trans perspectives.

My analysis of the *Tush* song, "To Darnelladon (and Beyond)," using the principle of art as self-love, showcases Apong's sonic and aesthetical commitment to the Black queer genres of disco and house. Her presence recognizes the value in challenging the mainstream and hegemonic constructions of these genres. My reading of Apong's music through the context of self-love outlines the extent to which she claims the authority to create her own representations that both affirm and celebrate the fullness of her Black queer being. Roye's photography further dismantles limited constructions of the Caribbean as being homogenously homophobic, while bridging a long-standing generational gap between Black queer and trans foremothers, fathers and parents who paved the way for subsequent generations of Black queer and trans love. Her photographic series, *Out of Many, One People,* shares a commitment to affirming Black queer and trans identities in the African diaspora using both Caribbean and Canadian contexts. Their combined intersectional perspectives not only signal a radical articulation of Black Canadian life in ways that refuse anti-Blackness and heteronormativity, but Apong and Roye both offer ordinary readings of Black queer and trans life in the everyday.

In the fourth chapter, I use the principle of art as embodied history to show how the performance and visual art and music of Camille Turner and Sandra Brewster, and my own music, collectively reflect the intersecting histories and contemporary realities of Black experiences in Canada and the Caribbean. Turner's performance of "Miss Canadiana" centers her body in the role of an imagined Canadian beauty queen. Turner challenges how the wider Canadian landscape is represented and understood by inserting the standpoint of a Black woman of Caribbean descent to dispel normative constructions of white "Canadianness." Brewster's use of visual art in her *Blur* series further expands this limited notion of "Canadianness" by demonstrating the varied identities that comprise Black Canadian populations. These reevaluated

notions of Black Canada are fluid and diasporic as also shown in Brewster's glass jar of fruits, "Heirloom," (Brewster 2017) which is symbolic of Caribbean cultural memory and household practices. My sonic intervention, which centers both my Canadian and Jamaican identities, also demonstrates this Black Canadian cultural fluidity through my "soulified" Bob Marley cover of "Waiting in Vain."

Despite the ability of a Black women's arts praxis to provide clarity to the complex ways that second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women artists navigate everyday Canadian society, it is still important to recognize the convoluted desire to be and/or belong. Royson James (2017) uses youth perspectives to contextualize this complicated process of second-generation be(long)ing by outlining how racism continues to be a challenge for Black Canadian communities. He states, "[t]hese are kids born here. In 2011, for the first time, the majority of young Black adults in the GTA were Canadian-born, outnumbering those born in the islands. But instead of building security on top of their parent's angst, they report anxiety beyond that of their elders" (James 2017). While the participating artists for this dissertation exceed James' discussed age range of 16 to 24 years, reflections from all the participating artists confirm that "the next generation of Black people in Toronto feel more victimized than the previous one" and underscore that this second-generation anxiety is indeed a shared experience (James 2017).

Brianna Roye, for example, understands this sense of alienation from Canada as a kind of geographic estrangement:

> I don't think Canada will ever be home for us, really. Toronto is the closest thing we will get to feeling like home… it's just very clear that they use us as poppy show…

> 'oh look we're so culturally diverse and ray tay tay' but realistically they're tearing up all of Eglinton West right now… Is this really home for us?... How can we feel like this is home when the home that we carved out for ourselves is literally being destroyed? (2020)

Anique Jordan echoes Roye's distinction between community and national belonging in her separation of the more diverse city of Toronto from Canada, so that both function as distinct sites of negotiated relationships for Black people: "I do consider Toronto home, but I realize that when I travel and people ask me where I'm from, I usually say Toronto, not Canada… I think that there is a little bit of hesitancy to call the entirety of Canada home, when I don't feel like Canada says that I belong here" (2020). While Jordan and Roye gesture toward moments when something like home may be possible in Canada via Toronto, other Black women, like Shi Wisdom, choose to totally reject affiliations with the Canadian nation-state.

Wisdom's rejection of Canadian affiliations is in response to her sentiment that white Canadians do not want anyone other than white people living here:

> I don't identify as a Canadian, even though I was born here… Nothing about this place makes me feel like this would be a place that I would call home, other than the fact that I live here… Canada doesn't really want Black people here. They don't really want much of anyone but white people here. But they'll keep people around because they want to keep up the façade of multiculturalism. (2020)

The maintenance of this multicultural façade is similarly evident in Sandra Brewster's satirical note about the Canadian societal acknowledgement of "all of the peoples of this land": You know Canada is made up of so many people, they say we should be acknowledging all the peoples of this land properly. But it's always interesting to me that… we're always having to grapple... it seems like you're not sure, or you're not settled with, and all of this jazz. But…

it's part of being human. That's just how it is" (2020). Although this attempt at acknowledgement resonates with official Canadian multicultural rhetoric, earlier critiques from Davis (2006), Salojee (2004), and Walcott (2001) make clear that symbolic gestures are not enough. I believe that Black women's existing alternatives to multiculturalism can shift this narrative from one dependent on mere acknowledgement, which routinely absolves opportunities for reparations, to a human responsibility to care for one another at all costs. Black women's rejection of multiculturalism would instead identify and actively address the repercussions of the overlapping systemic and institutional violence that permits slavery and settler-colonialism.

Historical and contemporary translations of this racist violence can be identified as a function of what Sharpe (2016) calls the weather and Hartman (2007) identifies as slavery's afterlives. This historical and ongoing violence is evident in the implementation and ongoing legacy of residential schools; the exploitation of Chinese labour for the Canadian Pacific Railway in the late nineteenth century; Canada's refusal of the South Asian passengers aboard the Komagata Maru in 1914; the destruction of Africville in 1970; the more recent gentrification of Eglinton West and Regent Park; contemporary anti-Asian racism that has increased since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic; and other forms of ongoing racism and cultural segregation. These demonstrate how an ongoing sense of alienation in Canada operates beyond Black experiences. The implications of this alienation from a second-generation Black Canadian context demonstrates, however, how this sense of alienation continues to be experienced in relation to an African diasporic past.

These multiple ruptures of being and consciousness, thus, transcend historic time and geographic space. Camille Turner expresses this rupture as a sense of self-dissolution:

I left Jamaica when I was nine. I didn't go back until I was twenty-two. But the Jamaica in my mind was very different than the Jamaica I went back to. I just remember that feeling of real rupture when I went back. Because it's like how do I even put this together again? How do I put myself together? Who am I?… I feel like that is so much of the driving force behind the work that I do: putting myself together and finding home, that search for belonging. (2020)

Ultimately, as Apong concludes, the notion of home may best be understood not as a physical place or space but as constructed within the safety of other people, one's "chosen family": "Home is wherever I feel safe, and often that's not a place but it's like within a person, or with people… home is when I'm with my chosen family. Wherever that is, it doesn't matter... It's feeling based. It's people based, rather than geographic. So far anyways, we'll see when I move maybe then I'll feel like home. Who knows?" (2020). These collective responses all demonstrate the complexity of second-generation be(long)ing while identifying the various ways that Black women upend the Canadian national multiculturalist project.

In addition to being acutely aware that their respective locations do not always feel like home, some of the artists remain hopeful in the possibility of finding one elsewhere or at the very least are deeply invested in continuing that search. Avtar Brah (1996) explains this ongoing search by situating constructions of borders and diaspora in a politics of location defined as a "position of multi-axial locationality" grounded in contradiction (201). This paradox is further explained through Brah's differentiation between a "homing desire" and a "desire for a 'homeland'" outlining the ways in which "home" reflects complex experiences of both safety and terror (177).

The participating artists' constructions of home also illuminate the inconsistent choice between labeling Toronto as home versus Canada more broadly. This tension clarifies my choice to strategically use Black women's relationships to the city as indicative of a wider Canadian experience to suggest how we have the capacity to (re)define and legitimize new understandings of Canada and "Canadianness." This strategy is in no way attempting to declare that there is just one way to be Canadian, but rather that Canadian identities are not stagnant and would benefit from other readings outside of Eurocentric, patriarchal, ablelist, bi/homo/trans-phobic contexts. This dissertation posits the unique second-generation position of be(long)ing to capture the nuanced ways that Black women's belonging and being are experienced as one response to Black women's complex and conflicting relationships with Canada.

In addition to creating pathways toward be(long)ing, this dissertation posits the politics of self-reclamation to account for active (un)learning, self-awareness, and healing as crucial aspects of the be(long)ing process. This quest is most apparent in Turner's response statement about the sense of rupture she experienced in relation to her understanding of home in a Jamaican context. In asking, "[h]ow do I put myself together? Who am I?" Turner exemplifies how Black women grapple with those instances when their understandings of self and relationship to home and the world more broadly turn out to be fallacious (2020). Self-reclamation thus aims to bring to the forefront how Black people choose to define their own place in the world following this rupture. In response to what we are to make of Canada as "home," this place which prides itself on being all-welcoming yet, in fact, is guilty of countless human rights violations, Apong's understanding of home that is not location based offers a profound alternative.

Sometimes "home" in its normative sense can be a very scary and violent place, but

Apong demonstrates that it does not have to be by situating home within a community of care. All of the second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women artists highlighted throughout this dissertation, indeed, demonstrate that Black women already have the tools to create the kind of home and world(s) they need.

Toward Black Liberation: Second-Generation Black Caribbean Canadian Women's Art-Making

In discussing her art, Brewster shares that she is always "looking for true representations of people" (2020). These representations contribute to "a new place" and can "be carried with you in all sorts of ways" across time and space (Brewster, Artist Talk). In my own artistic practice, I use music to stay sane and to make sense of the nonsense around me with the hope that whoever listens might catch a break too. Wisdom similarly understands her art as "healing" in ways that make you feel less alone (2020). Turner, on the other hand, is a time traveller who understands time as nonlinear, extending into the past, present, and future to demonstrate "what is and what can be" (2020). Roye has a simple yet profound message: "We exist." Her message is coupled with the advice that "if you think it, try it" to remind us that we owe it to ourselves to document Black experiences for the generations to come (Roye 2020). Apong feels most fulfilled when she is able to build rich relationships of mutual recognition that are both "healing" and "regenerative" while her art reaches the communities it is supposed to find (2020). Jordan was once "obsessed with the idea of freedom" and is keenly interested in how artists have "been giving us spaces of freedom through their work." By asking, "what does that really mean? Where is that found? How is it purchased? How is it taken? What is this? This idea of freedom. Am I free? And what do we need to do to claim it?," Jordan's artwork illuminates her own way of providing answers to these questions (2020).

Ultimately, I read my own art, as well as the artwork of Kamilah Apong, Sandra Brewster, Anique Jordan, Brianna Roye, Camille Turner, and Shi Wisdom as indicative of what Saidiya Hartman (2007) describes as "the dream of an elsewhere" where Black communities creatively imagine and fashion the means to survive and thrive within slavery's afterlife (234). As descendants of enslaved Africans who are now living in the wake of slavery, through our very lives and artwork, we follow our ancestors' defiance of societal odds by "daring to claim or make spaces of something like freedom" (Sharpe 2016, 130). These movements toward Black liberation stem from our particular localities which emerge from within Canada and extend across the African diaspora. In sharing second-generation Black Caribbean Canadian women's perspectives by releasing our artwork into the world, we exercise a refusal to "surrender our imaginations, even amid the backdrop of Black suffering and death that seems unstoppable" (Maynard 2017, 234). As much as these artistic narratives speak back to systemic and institutional Black death in Canada and beyond, they also signal so much more about the everydayness of Black experiences that simply display the "beauty of human life" (Quashie 2012, 102). Although primarily focused on the mediums of visual and performance art, photography, and music, other art forms such as (but not limited to), poetry, dance, playwriting also offer fascinating insights into Afro-diasporic life in Canada. While I ultimately conclude by positioning the selected artwork as a second-generation way of articulating "Canadianness," Black women's artwork functions in infinite ways. Womanism as a lens allows my work to recognize every Black woman as an artist while being cognizant of the fact that our very lives depend on our creations. These Black women-led interventions cultivate safe spaces while fostering communities of reciprocal be(long)ing. For these reasons we are forever in their debt.

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APPENDIX A – INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR ARTISTS

Informed Consent Form

Date: ______________________

Study Name:
Art Routes: Locating Second-Generation Caribbean Women's Perspectives in Black Canadian Feminist and Womanist Thought

Researcher name:
Shaunasea Brown, Principal Investigator
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Purpose of the Research:
This research uses music, photography, visual and performance art to shed light on the overlooked second-generation voices of Black Canadian women. This arts-based approach analyzes the work of six self-identified Black women artists: Kamilah Apong, Shi Wisdom, Brianna Roye, Anique Jordan, Sandra Brewster and Camille Turner. This research will be conducted through the process of one-on-one interviews. My research aims to expand on Black Canadian feminist scholarship by asking questions such as: How does art and performance inform Black Canadian feminist thought? How is Blackness articulated/represented through art? What is the role of the Black Canadian woman artist-scholar? What sets second-generation Black Canadian women's experiences apart from generations before and after? This fieldwork will highlight experiences of second-generation Toronto-based Black women of Caribbean descent by sharing how they experience, process, and creatively shape the world. The findings will be comprised in my dissertation as part of the requirement for my doctoral degree.

What You Will Be Asked to Do in the Research:
Your role as a participant requires you to answer a series of discussion questions about your work as an artist and the various ways that impacts your identity as a Black Canadian woman of Caribbean descent. These questions will be conducted remotely via Zoom through a one-on-one interview with myself, the Principal Investigator, and will take up to one hour for completion. As a thank you for taking the time out to participate in this study and your willingness to share and discuss your art you will receive $100.

Risks and Discomforts:
I do not foresee any risks or discomfort from your participation in the research.

Benefits of the Research and Benefits to You:
Your participation comes with a series of shared benefits for both the researcher and yourself as a participant. You have the opportunity to build community and sisterhood through discussions about your art and how your experiences contribute to wider narratives concerning second-generation Black Canadian womanhood. This will open more opportunities to creatively learn and engage with Black Canadian women's experiences in the academy. These benefits also include the highlighting of specifically second-generation perspectives of Black women in Canada who are currently understudied in existing scholarship.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal:
Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer, to stop participating, or to refuse to answer particular questions will not influence the nature of the ongoing relationship you may have with the researchers or study staff, or the nature of your relationship with York University either now, or in the future.

If you decide to stop participating, you may withdraw without penalty, financial or otherwise, and you will still receive the promised inducement.

In the event you withdraw from the study, all associated data collected will be immediately destroyed wherever possible. Should you wish to withdraw after the study, you will have the option to also withdraw your data up until the analysis is complete.

Confidentiality:

- Unless you choose otherwise, all recorded information in this interview you supply during the research will be held in confidence and unless you specifically indicate your consent, your name will not appear in any report or publication of the research.

- Data will be collected through a combination of handwritten notes and audio recordings which will be later transcribed. Hard copies of your data will be safely stored in a locked filing cabinet while soft-copies will be on a secure USB. Only the researcher and supervisor, Dr. Andrea Davis will have access to this information.

- The data will all be securely stored on a USB and in a locked filing cabinet for the next four years until August 1st 2024, where the data will be deleted. Any hard copies from the transcribed data will be destroyed via paper shredder.

- Confidentiality will be provided to the fullest extent possible by law.

Questions About the Research?
If you have questions about the research in general or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact me at shaunac1@yorku.ca or my supervisor, Dr. Andrea Davis at aadavis@yorku.ca and/or (416) 736-2100 x 44674. You may also contact the Graduate Program in Humanities at gpahuma@yorku.ca and/or 416.736.2100 x 77400.

This research has received ethics review and approval by the Delegated Ethics Review Committee, which is delegated authority to review research ethics protocols by the Human Participants Review Sub-Committee, York University's Ethics Review Board, and conforms to the standards of the Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines. If you have any questions about this process, or about your rights as a participant in the study, please contact the Sr. Manager & Policy Advisor for the Office of Research Ethics, 5th Floor, Kaneff Tower, York University (telephone 416-736-5914 or e-mail ore@yorku.ca).

Legal Rights and Signatures:
I ___________________________, consent to participate in “Art Routes: Locating Second-Generation Caribbean Women’s Perspectives in Black Canadian Feminist and Womanist Thought” conducted by Shaunasea Brown. I have understood the nature of this project and wish to participate. I am not waiving any of my legal rights by signing this form. My signature below indicates my consent.

Signature ________________________ **Date** ____________________
Participant

Signature ________________________ **Date** ____________________
Principal Investigator

Additional consent (where applicable)

1. **Audio recording**

☐ I consent to the audio-recording of my interview(s).

2. **Video recording or use of photographs**

I ____________________ consent to the use of images of me (including photographs, video and other moving images), my environment and property in the following ways (please check all that apply):

In academic articles	[ ] Yes	[ ] No
In print, digital and slide form	[ ] Yes	[ ] No
In academic presentations	[ ] Yes	[ ] No
In media	[ ] Yes	[ ] No
In thesis materials	[ ] Yes	[ ] No

Signature: Date:

____ ______________________
Participant: (name)

3. **Consent to waive anonymity**

I, ____________________, consent to the use of my name in the publications arising from this research.

Signature: Date:

____ ______________________
Participant: (name)

APPENDIX B – SEMI- STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Name/pronouns?
2. Can you share about any defining moment(s) that impacted your understanding of yourself as an artist?
3. Can you share about any defining moment(s) that impacted your understanding of yourself as a Black girl/woman? For example, in ways that made you pay attention to the fact that your race and gender meant something different/complex. (Valorized/othered? Informed your understanding of your "place" in society/the wider world) Might these ideas shape your art?
4. Can you tell me about your background? What was your childhood like being raised here and/or elsewhere? I also have a deep quote to share which talks about complexities of identity politics:

"We believe that the most profound and potentially most radical politics come directly out of our own identity, as opposed to working to end somebody else's oppression. In the case of Black women this is a particularly repugnant, dangerous, threatening, and therefore revolutionary concept because it is obvious from looking at all the political movements that have preceded us that anyone is more worthy of liberation than ourselves. We reject pedestals, queenhood, and walking ten paces behind. To be recognized as human, levelly human, is enough." – Combahee River Collective

What, if anything, do you think this quote means? I ultimately use this passage to inquire one relatively simple thing: If you were to describe your identity/identities what would it/they be?

5. How do you understand your role as an artist?/What does art mean to you?
6. Does your work speak to your/our position as a Black womxn in Canada? What might some of those messages be?
7. Can you tell me about some of your understandings of *home, belonging and being*? I use those three terms to acknowledge how our relationships to place can often be obscured and are always shifting.
8. How is "Blackness" and/or the Black diaspora represented through your work? Is there any particular message being conveyed about whatever it means to be Black through your art?
9. Does the theme of (Black) Freedom appear in your work? I am thinking about how artists like writers, and poets for example create to save their lives/lives of others. And use writing to express their innermost thoughts and feelings. Do concepts like freedom, the imaginary, or dreams show up through your creative processes?

10. Questions specific to Selected Artwork:

Anique Jordan

- Can you tell me about the significance of your choice to create these Black and white/self-portraits?
- After attending your talk with Priya Ramanujam, I wanted to ask you about the extent to which spirituality plays a role in your work/practice?
- Visiting Zaluckly Contemporary for the *Ban' Yuh Belly* also had me curious about the role that conversations about Black women's mental health appears in your work.

- The image “These Times” in particular, left me grappling with the overall question about how Black women cope/or do not cope with all of the things that inform Black life.
- Meaning, not only the trauma, sorrow, and grief that accompanies it but also, that image was to me an extra reminder for Black women to cultivate joy and happiness and to live life to the fullest in any capacity that we’re able..

Brianna Roye

- Can you please tell me about the significance of Black Queer representation in your work?
- Any particular reasons for your colour choices? For example, your use of lomochrome film purple or vibrant and bright hues in *Out Of Many One People?*
- What does this series tell us about the relationship between Caribbean AND Canada and the differing ways Black queer and trans communities navigate/create spaces in these geographic locations?
- What does *Out Of Many One People* have to tell us about the role of love in all its forms?
- In response to your 500px blog post, will you be starting that YouTube channel anytime soon?
- When you take breaks from photography because of ‘photographers’ block’ what do you do instead???

Camille Turner

- Can you tell me the background story about “Miss Canadiana”?
- According to your website, you mention the objective of “re-writ[ing] your personal history.” Can you share more about how you go about that in your art and how your “Miss Canadiana” performance specifically lends to that aim?
- A theme that sticks out for me in relation to your performance is contradiction. For example, as a second-generation Canadian I’ve always had shifting/complex understandings of citizenship and have largely come to terms with being a citizen of nowhere. But at-the-same-time as a human being something tells me that I ought to claim somewhere but my “Blackness” makes that process fraught. What “Miss Canadiana” does for me is create the space to encapsulate all of those complexities at the same time of which I simply frame as being contradictory. Can you share whether or not this idea of contracition is taken up in your work?
- If miss Canadiana had one thing to say to Black women and girls what would that be?

Sandra Brewster

- Your installation Heirloom sticks out to me since it is surrounded by various other gel transferred images. Could you share more about this “Heirloom” jar came to be? I am thinking about it in relation to other objects from your token exhibit and was curious about your choice of a jar with fruits instead of a broom or some other random household object?
- Can you tell me the background story about how your Blur series came to be?

- In your conversation with Canisia Lubrin at the Ago, you talk about control (or lack thereof) in the making of Blur. You mentioned that you were beginning to think about how even your relating to the people you're photographic impacts that process, and that this idea about control goes beyond blur.. that it's something else. Can you share more about what you might think that something else is?
- Can you share more about the extent to which relationships to community/sisterhood/kin etc. influenced blur?
- You also talked about gel transfer having a rhythm, and listening to Fela and Miles Davis during that rhythmic process. Are there any other musical artists that fuel your creative process?
- You further mentioned that, "Camille Turner crowned herself as miss Canadiana, that for me was an ultimate thing!" Please share more about this ultimate performance.

Shi Wisdom

- What is the background story behind Young Gunner?
- Can you talk about what it is like navigating the Toronto music scene as a Black woman artist?
- I love you style/Artist aesthetic. How do your looks come about? Do you have a stylist? What is your inspiration for these looks?
- Can you share more about your relationship to Eglinton West and/or Parkdale? I noticed these neighbourhoods as the settings in your music videos.
- Do you have any advice for young up and coming artists?
- I noticed you have some dubs on bandcamp? Can you share more about how those came about?

Kamiah Apong

- What/where/who is Darnelladon? And Beyond?
- Any thoughts you'd like to share about the Music scene for Black women artists here in the city?
- What happened to *Unbuttoned?*
- I noticed that since the band switch you have an entirely different sound now. Share more about that transition and why you're in a season of disco/house.
- Can you tell me more about the work you do at *Lil' Sis*?
- Have you every considered doing solo work?