

You are a memory, I am your shadow



**Mele Broomes ~ Ashanti Harris ~ Asuf Ishaq ~
Michael Mersinis ~ Nadia Zhaya & Arthur Start
Cuarted by Shalmali Shetty**

Reid Gallery, Glasgow School of Art,
167 Renfrew St., Glasgow, UK
22 September - 4 October 2023

Supported by The Glasgow School of Art Exhibitions

You are a memory, I am your shadow.

Mele Broomes
Ashanti Harris
Asuf Ishaq
Michael Mersinis
Nadia Zhaya & Arthur Start
Curated by Shalmali Shetty

Preview
22 Sep

Running
23 Sep -
04 Oct
2023

Reid
Gallery
THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART



@GSAExhibitions

Artists

Mele Broomes, Ashanti Harris, Asuf Ishaq, Michael Mersinis, Nadia Zhaya & Arthur Start

Curated by

Shalmali Shetty

Exhibition Dates

23 September - 4 October 2023

Preview

Friday, 22 September; 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Open everyday 10:00 - 5:00 p.m., except Sundays and Bank Holidays

Venue

Reid Gallery, Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow

Supported by

Glasgow School of Art Exhibitions

Press

[Dreaming New Landscapes](#), Harvey Dimond, The Skinny Feature p. 55 (December Issue)

[Signalling an Artwork Event](#), The Herald Scotland (September 2023)

Links

[Glasgow School of Art](#)

[GSA Exhibitions](#)

[GSA Exhibitions Blog](#)

[GSA Exhibitions Flickr Documentation](#)

Cover and Poster Image

Shimmering (2023), Shalmali Shetty

Dreams are borne in the inbetweenness of reality and irreality; on the periphery of sleep and wakefulness; along the spectral seam between remembering and forgetting; on the margins that define landscapes and territories, integrating the personal with the political. Dreaming becomes a space in time, contained within the body and its ambit of consciousness. Dreaming is a consequence of pasts that cannot return but that which still haunt; effected by hopes that are yet to arrive; wherein the body grapples in the ephemeral passage of the present, and traverses undefined, surreal realms. Dreaming becomes a resounding memory of warped, overlapping timelines; and the body a shadow, manifesting these memories.

Showcasing a series of films, photographs, objects, installations, and marked by two performances, the exhibition invites viewers to contemplate and dream, both individually and collectively.

CURATORIAL NOTE

The title on the one hand alludes to the temporal dimension of the past bearing memories; and on the other, our bodies in the present continuous, that function as an archive—shadowing and manifesting these memories.

Memories serve as repositories of not only a sense of a deep human history, preserving imprints of inherited ancestral knowledge, historical timelines, or experiences from individual lifetimes, but also a grappling with present circumstances and unascertained futures, blurring the confines of a linear sense of time. Perhaps it is through the process of dreaming then, in the liminal, in-between space of sleep and wakefulness, that one is able to traverse and embody the many lives across the imagined, elusive, spectral, fictitious, mythological, as well as feelings of desire, aspirations and goals, and the accompanying notions of fear, fragmentation and devastation.

Dreams have held a symbolic, spiritual, cultural and philosophical significance across societies. My grandmother often said that while the act of sleeping was liminal, dreaming in the process, was a consequence of the soul leaving the body to encounter other souls and parallel dimensions, possibilities, alternatives, while the body remained within the physical realm in the form of a vessel, a mediator, an abode. But for the soul to return, the body in turn has to be cared for, preserved, protected, nourished, cleansed. But how do you ensure the well-being of the body in a world rife with circumstances?

What does it mean to dream in a given time and space, in the confines of a home, or in the liminal spaces of transitions? What does it mean to dream individually, or collectively in association to landscapes and environments one inhabits, the stories handed down through generations, the intangible experiences one has had, the tangible realities we are all undergoing? What does it mean to dream amidst the current socio-political and ecological conditions, with the rapid advancements in technology, the constant inundation and exposure to media visuals, overwhelming news reports and the sensory overload we experience? How do encounters, associations, memories, erasures, emotions and the very dreams resulting from them, contribute to the shaping of our subjective perception of the world? ...when do dreams transform into nightmares?

In his seminal work 'The Location of Culture' (1994), critical theorist Homi K. Bhabha speaking of the postcolonial condition, elucidates on ideas of the in-between and liminal in relation to concepts of diversity, hybridity and the Third Space. He conjectures, "we should remember that it is the 'inter'—the cutting edge of translation and negotiation, the in-between space—that carries the burden of the meaning of culture. It makes it possible to begin envisaging national, anti-nationalist histories of the 'people'. And by exploring this Third Space, we may elude the politics of polarity and emerge as the others of our selves." (p.38)

The exhibition brings together works of five artists responding to the theme of 'dreaming' through a multifaceted narrative, tying together their explorations of time, space, memory,

nostalgia, desire, loss, fragmentation and the general human experience. The works collectively underscore the use of technology's ability to float beyond the constraints of a linear sense of time. Intriguingly, sound becomes a persisting element across the works—conversational, melodic, reverberating, overlapping, intersecting, haunting—reconstituting fragmented landscapes.

Nadia Zhaya's installation in collaboration with Arthur Start's soundtrack is evocative of a primeval eternal flame that serves as a timeless witness to the transforming aspects of nature and civilization. Set up within the confines of darkness, it becomes a source of spiritual energy symbolic of creation, innovation and destruction; a personal drive, desire, force and a dreaming. The mirrors placed on diagonally opposite walls, represent voids, consuming and reflecting the light.

Ashanti Harris initiates a ritual of remembrance within a sacred mud circle—the earth, a place of identity. The performance pays tribute to an ancestral figure to honour their legacy, wisdom and guidance. While the offering of golden corn cobs placed over an oil drum is an expression of gratitude to a homeland and those who came before us, it also serves as a reminder of its association to the violent histories of colonisation, slavery and oppression.

In line with this, Mele Broomes' enclosed canopy created to house the sound work, transforms into a sacred shrine for the purpose of communal listening, contemplation and poetic imagination—a sensory experience through auditory means. The soundtrack is an ode to culinary traditions that may have been lost or transformed over time, an oral retelling that regurgitates memories and emotions of community gatherings that come together to cook and share space. The performance on the other hand, reflects on the conversations had between herself and her sibling about experiences of ongoing sleep paralysis—a transitional state of possibilities and ensuing uncertainties.

In contrast, Michael's exploration of memory resonates through a series of photographs captured during earthquakes, creating a sense of a non-synchronous time and space. The installation of the military tent emanates a sequence of low-frequency droning, visceral and haunting radio transmissions capturing an auditory landscape following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Both series contribute to delineating a ruptured landscape impacting the body and the psyche, through trauma, loss and pain. The landscape is rife with shattered dreams and hopes, lost lives and bodies—the very land sustaining Ashanti's oil barrel and ritual circle—reminders of land and war, but also reminiscent of life, death and rebirth.

While still reflecting on this, Asuf's films delineate the aftermath of war, partition, separation, migration and fragmentation. Deriving narratives from personal archives, memories of his childhood and stories from his mother, he illustrates the experiences of growing up within an unfamiliar landscape away from his own homeland of Pakistan, insinuating a deep sense of nostalgia. The muslin drapes alongside an analogue TV, add a spectral layer to his films. The use of muslin alludes to themes of colonization, exploitation, and trade through cultural economy that resulted in its eventual ruin, loss and death of the material.

MELE BROOMES

Mele Broomes' work embodies stories from the collective voice, creating visceral and sensory collaborations. Her work GRIN was presented at Battersea Art Centre, London, alongside the film production which was also screened at Theatre Centre Canada as part of Cultura Inglesa Festival in Brazil. In 2021 she was commissioned by Scottish Dance Theatre, where she created *Amethyst*, a theatre production and digital publication. Broomes was co-founder and co-director of Project X Dance (2017-2021), an organisation that champions dance and performance within the African and Caribbean Diaspora in Scotland. She is currently the founder and director of Body Remedy (2020), a [forming] ecology that centres on physical practice for self-recovery for black people and people of colour (BPOC).



Seasonal (2023)

Audio-track placed inside tent

Duration: 19 mins 30 secs (looped)

Seasonal is a demonstration of embodying sound, making sound and sharing through reconnection and disconnection of senses. Reflecting on the journeys made to form shared spaces, to prepare and share food and be in conversation.

taste
smell the taste
tasting the smell
making regurgitated aromas
refinding taste and smell through the body
to feel the past and make our paths
nourish our bodies
fuel the vessel
that makes that dance
and shares our visceral history



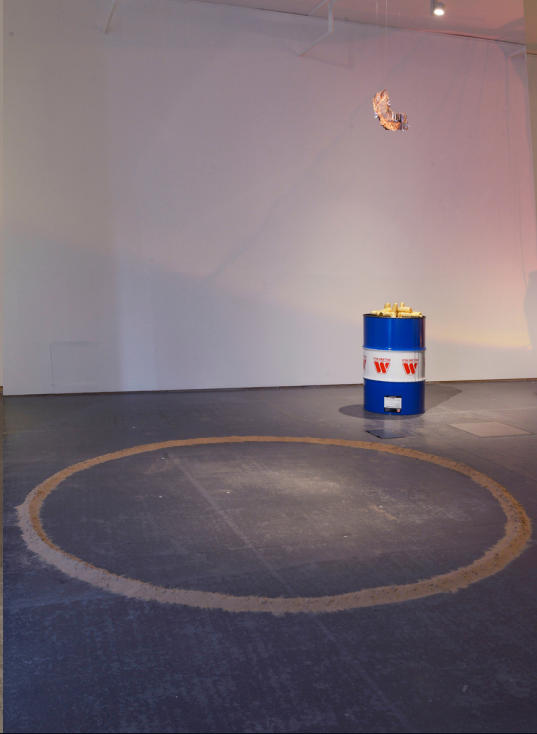
Siblings with sleep paralysis: a vocal and choreographic talk (2023)

Performance: 15 mins

(On Preview; 22nd September, 6:00 p.m.)

Mele will be reflecting and sharing the conversation between herself and her sibling, about experiences of having ongoing sleep paralysis since their childhood. This performance will be a sharing of memory, experience and surrendering to new discoveries through movement and talking.

The tools we used to navigate fear; fear that manifested from not being heard;
And when some of us flew, there was elation, elevation;
The shift in perspective and engagement with body, self, realm and ideologies;
The collective sharing and understanding that validated our experience;
The connection and disconnection to self, past, present and future;
The intrigue and interpretation of existence.



ASHANTI HARRIS

Ashanti Harris is a multi-disciplinary artist, researcher and lecturer. Working with dance, performance, facilitation, sound, installation and writing, Harris' work disrupts historical narratives and reimagines them from a Caribbean diasporic perspective. Recent commissions and exhibitions include: *A Carnival of Overlapping Histories*, Platform, Glasgow (2023); *Black Gold*, Fringe of Colour Film Festival, Edinburgh (2023); Jerwood Staging Series 2022, Jerwood Arts, London (2022); *Dancing a Peripheral Quadrille*, Edinburgh Sculpture Workshop, Edinburgh (2022); *An Exercise in Exorcism*, GoMA, Glasgow (2021); Opening Night, Timehri Film Festival, Georgetown (2021); *JUMBIES*, Glasgow International, Glasgow (2021); *This Woman's Work*, Third Horizon Film Festival, Miami (2021); *Miraculous Noise*, Viborg Kunsthall, Viborg (2021); OHCE, Radiophrenia, 87.9FM (2020); *Being Present*, OGR, Torino (2020); *In The Open*, The Common Guild, Glasgow (2020).



Ancestor Jumbie (2019)

Mesh wire

Forsakin' Corn for Gold (2019)

Plaster casts coated with gold leaf; Oil barrell

A Burial with Shalmali (2023)

Performance within sand circle: 45 mins

Tuesday, 26th September 2023; 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

The works presented in this exhibition are all part of an ongoing body of work which honours ancestral histories, making each of these works was a ritual of remembering, processing and giving thanks. This body of work includes a performance to release the histories held in the body; a golden shrine and offering for the ancestors; and a mask made in honour of and in connection with an imagined ancestral presence.

ASUF ISHAQ

Asuf Ishaq draws on his experience of migration as a child and the stories of his parents. He unfolds the geographical and cultural dislocation, by revisiting personal archives and reimagining the experience, by weaving memories and imagined time, place, and relationships. Ishaq incorporates land and soil, recognising the symbolic significance as both the beginning and endpoint; a transtemporal portal, an archive of migration.

Ishaq grew up in Birmingham and now works between Birmingham and London. Ishaq studied MFA Fine Art at Goldsmiths College of Art. His recent exhibitions and awards include *Articles of Home*, solo exhibition at Reid Gallery, GSA Exhibitions, Glasgow (2023); *Not to be a Singular Being*, Chisenhale Art Place Studio, London (2022); The London Open, Whitechapel Gallery, London (2022); *Image Behaviour*, ICA London (2022); Bloomberg New Contemporaries, South London Gallery, London (2022); Groundings Film Screening, Goldsmiths CCA, London (2021); and *Inside the Country of the Skin*, solo exhibition at Stryx Gallery, Birmingham (2021).



Mother (2020)

Film projected onto fabric

Duration: 16 mins 4 secs

Ishaq's film *Mother* weaves relationships with his mother and unravels memories between their recollection, in a conversation centred around a fifty-year-old photograph of his mother. The photograph is treated as a family archive; an object that carries its own story. The artist moves through spaces, gathering up histories and memories that are lost or covered over in the movement of displacement and begins to produce new knowledge. By exploring the photograph with his mother, and involving her in his art practice, a space is created where they normally would not overlap. He carefully explores the photograph and the surface as skin, untangling his mother's memories and thoughts. The film shows the repair process of the photograph occurring in the bright space of the virtual environment. The photograph is a transitional object. Objects could be considered as any external object that a person creates a bond or relationship with. The house is explored concurrently, just as his mother's home; faith and prayer are shown as stable and strong as the walls of the house.



Tape Letter (2020)

CRT Monitor with headphones

Duration: 2 mins 31 secs

The film *Tape Letter* becomes a series of reimagined voice recordings between Ishaq's mother and her mother. His mother re-enacts speaking a message into a cassette recorder to her late mother. Ishaq is interested in technology as a mediator of relationships, taking inspiration from 1960's and 70's diaspora communities who used tape messages to speak to families. Telephones were too expensive and often inaccessible in rural communities in Pakistan. A visitor from England would then bring the tapes in an envelope for the families in Kashmir.

Articles of Home (2022)

Film projected onto fabric

Duration: 10 mins 12 secs

Ishaq's most recent film *Articles of Home* is a commission by ICA London for Image Behaviour 2021, which is an annual convening dedicated to experiments in artists' moving image. 'Articles of Home' narrates migration experience as told through a relationship with objects and places; in this case, things left behind by the artist's mother when she migrated to Britain. She hides her precious belongings in her cooking pot, burying them in the ground, a promise of return to reclaim them. His mother's home village in Kashmir, Pakistan, is submerged underwater for part of the year because of the new water Mangla dam. During the dry season, the land is available for farming. 'Articles of Home' explores what happens when this space can only be accessed temporarily, just as a recollection of memories. Ishaq deploys computer-generated graphics to reimagine the flooding village and uses photographs as a reference and memory landscape.

MICHAEL MERSINIS

Michael Mersinis is an artist from Greece. Mersinis studied Political Sciences and philosophy in Germany, Applied Photography and Fine Art Photography at The Glasgow School of Art. He has been teaching in the Fine Art Photography Department since 2009 and led the MLitt in Photography and the Moving Image until 2016. He is a member of the Reading Landscape Research Group at the GSA, the RSE and the RSA. Mersinis' practice and research is centred around the questioning of the Photographic Image, the notion of the place and the Image as Evental Site and the transliteration that occurs in the process of the photograph. Current projects include a long project on the history, locality and imagination of fundamental typologies of place that are historically present and liminal and the pursuit of a political identity in the contemporary image, a series of works that consider the locality and historical, geographical and cultural significance of site both real and imaginary.



Intercept (2022-2023)

Military pup tent; Military radio with antenna; Amplifier; Chipboard; Military Flag Signal Reminder; Blackboard
Audiotrack: 8 hours (looped)

The series of photographs and the sound installation included as part of this exhibition are simultaneously speaking to the nature of disseminating and intercepting of visual and auditory information. The geography and the politics along transmission and seismic lines are becoming more relevant in the light of recent events that deal with population migration, covert operations and political tensions. The first series of works (as part of the 2 sets of works presented here) considers the auditory landscape of war following the invasion to Ukraine by forces of the Russian Federation on the 24th of February 2022.

Intercept is a response to this event. The series of works propose an acoustic account of the invasion in Ukraine. Utilising a military transceiver, signals were intercepted from high ground in Scotland, Italy, Greece, Switzerland and Serbia following the initial invasion. All relevant military and civilian frequencies were monitored for activity in the Shortwave Spectrum and are presented here as an acoustic landscape, part of an installation that considers military equipment in the gallery space as both objects and tools of production. The sound piece records the communications that are relevant to the invasion and the struggle of Ukraine to resist.



Earthquake/Event (2019-2023)

Large format film printed on coated sterling silver plate
17 x 21 inches (framed)

The series of images is from a body of work called *Eathquake/Event* that is in progress. Custom pinhole cameras are installed on islands, islets and unnamed rock formations across the seismic ridge in the Mediterranean sea between what is now Greece and Turkey. A location of political tensions, migrant crossings and military operations, the cameras remain dormant, until activated by the seismic activity of the area. Each exposure is initiated, paused, continued for the duration of the earthquake. The process, like the exposure is unreliable and relies on processes that are unpredictable, but catalytic towards the formation of image. The negatives when retrieved are printed using a proprietary method on stainless sheets coated with sterling silver. Each work is unique.

NADIA ZHAYA

Nadia Zhaya (b. Moscow, Russia) is an intermedia artist working in 3-dimensional art, kinetic sculpture, immersive spatial and site-specific installation. Through the use of primeval forces of fire, light and drive, the artist explores the universal and inexhaustible realm of spiritual and physical energy. As an international artist, Zhaya often makes art celebrating the depth and beauty of the common ground. Inspired by the casually transcendental and timeless, Zhaya creates objects and installations as mesmerising and empowering experiences. Keen on making visual art a visceral and charged experience for audiences of all backgrounds, Zhaya creates atmospheric and engaging artworks incorporating kinetic or digital motion. Zhaya holds a BA in Fine Art Sculpture and Environmental Art from the Glasgow School of Art.

ARTHUR START

Arthur Start is an experimental musician currently composing physical-simulation-based sounds as Duskaz Wandilaz, using Supercollider, Python, analog electronics, guitar, and field recordings. With an abstract sense of beauty and abhorrence for convention, these experiments become highly conceptual, drawing from geometry, tree growth, flocking behaviour, meta-art, exoplanetary climate change, and generative language models. Sonically he is into distorted, diminished, nonlinear sounds, layered into thick textural tapestries. Arthur has played sporadically in several bands. With Jeramesa, on bass and baritone guitar, he played psychedelic structured jams around Oxford, culminating in an opening set for Sun Ra Arkestra. Duskaz Wandilaz has published an ambisonic exoplanetary drone EP 'Kepler 90', and an album of generative experiments 'Machine Art'.

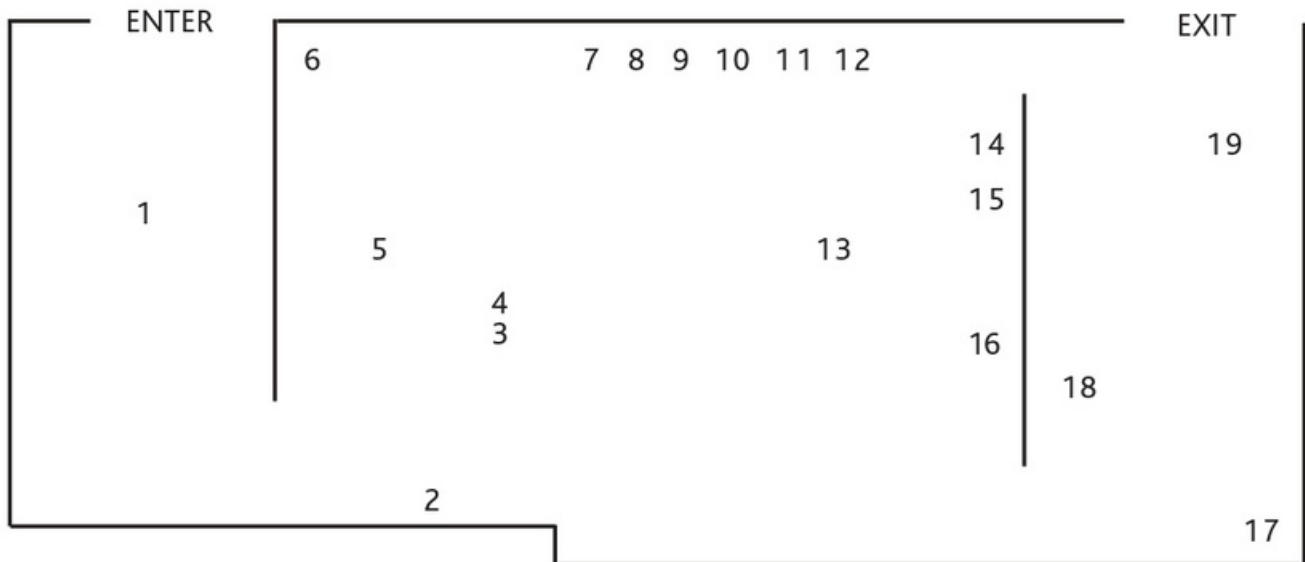


Energy Axis (2023)

Multimedia installation with soundtrack

Duration: 4 mins (looped)

The hologram is watched best from certain angles discovered by the viewer. It has been made from a real-life pillar of fire generated inside of a spinning kinetic sculpture. The fire vortex formed restlessly by the speed, embodies a resilient and inexhaustible personal energy backbone. The inner source of spirit and light, and the underlying soul-stirring desire and drive, take on the shape of an axis on fire. The installation serves as a personal eternal flame. The energy axis is accompanied by two voids on fire - voids being inherently infinite. When coming closer, the viewer sees themselves in and of the reflections. In the context of the exhibition, the energy axis is associated with the dream as one's own desire and real-life spirit; a feeling of a dream-fuelled full-on wakefulness. The sound is generated directly from the fire pillar's changing light intensity and motion, coded and composed by Arthur Start.



- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. <i>Energy Axis (2023)</i>
Nadia Zhaya & Arthur Start</p> <p>2. <i>Memory/Sunset (2019)</i>
Micheal Mersinis</p> <p>3. <i>A Burial with Shalmali (2023)</i>
Ashanti Harris</p> <p>4. <i>Ancestor Jumbie (2019)</i>
Ashanti Harris</p> <p>5. <i>Forsakin' Corn for Gold (2019)</i>
Ashanti Harris</p> <p>6. <i>Seasonal (2023)</i>
Mele Broomes</p> <p>7. <i>Earthquake / Event #21</i>
<i>Psara Island (South)</i>
39.484378, 25.027559 (2019 - 23)
Michael Mersinis</p> <p>8. <i>Earthquake / event #154</i>
<i>Lesvos Island (South)</i>
38.946068, 26.452984 (2021 - 23)
Michael Mersinis</p> <p>9. <i>Earthquake / event #91</i>
<i>St. Eustratios Island (North East)</i>
39.543999, 25.041846 (2019 - 2023)
Michael Mersinis</p> | <p>10. <i>Earthquake / event #44</i>
<i>Unnamed Island / K1485</i>
39.289082, 25.291231 (2019 - 23)
Michael Mersinis</p> <p>11. <i>Earthquake / event #29</i>
<i>Psara Island (North)</i>
38.603399, 25.557649 (2019 - 23)
Michael Mersinis</p> <p>12. <i>Earthquake / event #51</i>
<i>Unnamed Island / K1485</i>
38.702066, 25.806215 (2021 - 23)
Michael Mersinis</p> <p>13. <i>Intercept (2022 -23)</i>
Michael Mersinis</p> <p>14. <i>Operation Plan (2022 - 23)</i>
Michael Mersinis</p> <p>15. <i>WigWag Cheat Sheet (2022 - 23)</i>
Michael Mersinis</p> <p>16. <i>WigWag W-A-R (2023)</i>
Michael Mersinis</p> <p>17. <i>Tape Letter (2020)</i>
Asuf Ishaq</p> <p>18. <i>Mother (2020)</i>
Asuf Ishaq</p> <p>19. <i>Articles of Home (2022)</i>
Asuf Ishaq</p> |
|---|---|



**You are a memory,
I am your shadow**

Mele Broomes / Ashanti Harris
Asuf Ishay / Michael Merisins
Nadia Zhaya & Arthur Start

Curated by Shalmali Shetty

Dreams are borne in the inbetweenness of reality and unreality; on the periphery of sleep and wakefulness; along the spectral seam between remembering and forgetting; on the margins that define landscapes and territories, integrating the personal with the political.

Dreaming becomes a space in time, contained within the body and its ambit of consciousness.

Dreaming is a consequence of pasts that cannot return but that still haunt; effected by hopes that are yet to arrive, wherein the body grapples in the ephemeral passage of the present, and traverses undefined, surreal realms.

Dreaming becomes a resounding memory of warped, overlapping timelines; and the body a shadow, manifesting these memories.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

GSA Exhibitions Team: Jenny Brownrigg, John Farrell

Tech Team: Michael Hill Johnston, Maria Gondek, Louise Campion, Tom Gibson, Bronagh Murray, Hannah McNally, Heather McDonald, Harald Turek, Siri Black, Sean Black

Invigilators: Jessica Crowe, Caitlin Heaney, Sarah Grace Scott, Joanna Stawnicki, Viktoria Szaboova, Natalie Dawson

Mentorship & Advice: Ranjana Thapalyal

Install Advice: Zephyr Liddell

Documentation: Alan Dimmick, Tiu Makkonen

Poster: D8 Ltd., Glasgow

A special thank you to my father for suggesting the title from his own writings; my mother for tailoring the brilliant dull gold outfit; my flatmates for being so patient with me through the past months; my friends for making sure they checked on me, took me out, got me flowers; my colleagues and coworkers for accommodating my random schedules and timelines; my mentors who have looked out for me over the past years; the community I've found in Glasgow for being so supportive with my creative practice, and for the generous Scottish arts for making me a part of it.

This exhibition is supported by The Glasgow School of Art as part of the School's commitment to supporting 2020 graduates with physical shows once COVID restrictions allowed.

SHALMALI SHETTY

Shalmali Shetty is a curator, artist and writer working between the UK and India. Her research interests include themes of archives, memories, hauntology, oral histories, and speculative ideas around prophecies, oracles and imagined futures, extending this focus through the familiar framework of India, the Global South and its neo-colonial relationship to the West. She intends to coalesce her backgrounds in art practice and theory in the production of the curatorial. Shetty graduated with an MLitt in Curatorial Practice from the Glasgow School of Art (2020) supported by the Charles Wallace India Trust Scholarship. She is a recent recipient of the VACMA Award, Glasgow (2022); the Skinny x Edinburgh Art Festival Emerging Writer Programme, Edinburgh (2023); and the Art South Asia Project x Serendipity Arts Foundation Curatorial Research Fellowship, UK and India (2023).