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MFA Cohort 2019-20

Ruskin School of Art, University of Oxford

The images compiled here represent the work of the Ruskin MFA Cohort of 2020. With the cancellation of our degree show due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we needed an alternate emblem for the culmination and distribution of our work. Thus, we present you with this e-publication, a compilation of our artworks, presented as a gift. The images therein are able to be downloaded and printed at home—the current collective global site for working, eating, sleeping, exercising, dancing, socialising, dating, art-making, thinking, processing, sharing, dreaming and just about everything else one can imagine.

The character of a time determines the shape of a gift. This publication requires both giver and receiver to make something for the gift to be fully realised. When you print an image, we become clandestine collaborators, both giver and recipient playing an original part in the end result. In the end, you live with something unique. As we leave this era, our collaborative acts become more vital to making a new way forward. As the Ruskin MFA Cohort of 2020, we hope this is only the beginning.

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Film still from *Empty Box of Matches*

Joshua Alexander

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The personas of 100 Stories Left to Tell are females of Cyprus, and as you may ask, what makes Cyprus so crucial in this storytelling and what do I mean by a female? I am referring to the ones who travel under the sign of women. We were assigned female at birth. Our bodies, desires, and paths are to fight, defend, and sharpen our edges against the subordination of expression. I was unaware of the implications of including females from just one region. As I was making my way to making my way, I realized that the osteolytic impact of the landscape of trauma in that specific region is historically very significant. The conflict of Cyprus between Turkish and Greek ethnic groups, from the 1960s onwards, regarding relational problems was a result of a hurtful past, unresolved ordeals, broken promises, and strain in both communities. Fundamental human rights are as non-existent in Cyprus as democracy is in rogue states, in many or all ways. Recently, I saw in total rage, the insensibility of the prevalent misogyny within the Cypriot culture. With the recent case of the first Cypriot serial killer, who murdered five foreign women and two children, the police proved to be incompetent in conducting a proper investigation on reported missing people. The case had exposed an exploitative system that allows tens of thousands of migrant women to work as housemaids in conditions depicted as akin to modern slavery. From the protection of foreign women or even local women, yet again, in many or all ways. If these women were Cypriot, would the system have protected them? Would the police have claimed responsibility for their wrongdoings? I watched in fear, the vindictiveness, and manipulation of the media where the patriarchal jurisdiction drowned into nothingness a female British nineteen-year-old, in the rape case in Ayia Napa in the summer of 2019. The UK government raised concerns with the authorities in Cyprus over the fairness of a trial. The jurisdiction is flawed from the outset, and the sequence of events (from the treatment by the police to the court decision, the "retraction" statement and the distress) reflects how deeply rooted the culture of disbelief towards victims of abuse is, in yet again, one European country. I read in anguish, suicides of women that were victims of sexual and domestic violence from their step-fathers and grandfathers. In places where priests abused their power and justice did not serve its role. My words are utter, my body shivers of affliction, but I shall explain further. The landscape of trauma is prolific, and the institutional sexism in the context I am referring to is dangerous. The hostility of the system comes in the form of reducing women into objects and not subjects. The system has proven to fail its people, disregarding the fundamental rights, from the 1974 Turkish invasion to the recent history. Women were not to be excluded from this procedure. But in 100 stories left to tell, I shall not speak about the women that have survived sexual abuse or domestic violence. Not because their stories are not relevant to me; quite the contrary. However, unfortunately, in the context which I am writing and in the face of bureaucracy, I am facing difficulties in defining what consent means. I have filed several applications to receive ethical approval to document someone else's personal life. Even when I had already gotten permission from women that were willing to share their traumatic stories with me, I had to get approval from someone directly related to the people who have lived through trauma. From when did bureaucracy, and especially the Cypriot government, prove to be the expert in protecting a woman's well-being? It raised so many questions to me, and one of the most baffling ones was if I need an approval to speak about agency when I already got one from the ones that are directly involved. Unfortunately, that was the case, and therefore, I had to re-define the questions of this project. As I was working on that, the questions kept increasing. In particular, this occurred when I encountered the first response of bureaucracy that my research project should not include adults at risk; in other words, vulnerable. Even in the face of protection, women suffer exclusion from the traditions and conceptions of the human being. endorsing the male experience as the sole component of human nature. They can be involved in a civic engagement only if they tick specific boxes. Boxes such as "they should not be experiencing suicidal thoughts, suicidal ideation or have depression". This appears in many cases, problematic. What happens to the women who fall under those boxes? Don't they have a right to speak about their experiences if they are depressed? Who draws the line? Why should someone else decide for them? As a result, the lesser definition of the female has encouraged the second-wave feminism and conclusively myself into a discourse against how knowledge has been produced, conducted, and disseminated. Through 100 Stories Left to Tell, I seek for restorative justice. Women that went through trauma do not want to be known as adults at risk or victims. Women often feel ignored, neglected, and even abused by the speculation of the system that loosely labels them as vulnerable. In such cases, restorative justice theory can be applied. In the case of truth-telling, an essential element of healing one's trauma is the opportunity and chance to tell the story of what happened. A woman that has experienced something traumatic has a right to retell the story and her reaction to it as many times as she wishes - for therapeutic reasons or not. These stories are stories made of agency and autonomy, no matter the helplessness such women had to endure through their own experiences. Agency comes in maintaining a superiority above these experiences, in "restoring" their lives by telling the stories in settings, in places where they can receive a public acknowledgment.

2 -

Why Cyprus?

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3 -

*Pentas Bina Badan (Bodybuilder's Stage) III*

Haffendi Anuar

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Ideally printed on textured hammer effect card



4 -

*In Fire*

Amy Bernstein

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Ideally printed on matte photo rag paper



"In Fire" ||



5 -

*Complicit Pipes*

Meitong Chen

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Ideally printed on glossy paper







6 -

*Trigger...Trigger*

Laura Hindmarsh

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Ideally printed on glossy photo paper

7 -

- *Yours Faithfully*

Iuliia Iarova

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Ideally printed on Xerox office paper



- Yours faithfully.pdf





The imported Domestic  
Dried human Sacrifice  
Eating to forget  
A propaganda Garden  
With domicile vowels  
Rehearsing Old garments

My public is my private  
Tender teaks,  
Broken garden Erotica. x

~ A dark niche



### Let me be your BOOKMARK

Mi Park

[www.mipark.info](http://www.mipark.info)

@miiparkk

Ideally printed on paper and laminated







Dear institutional system.

How do you relate to diversity and fragility?

A reminder;

In 2018 I wanted to apply to your MFA program. I sent you an email. I asked you if you would consider an application with 50% study progression. Because of chronic illness I was unable to study full-time. You said no, that all your programs were full-time.

Do you know your approach to my inquiry is breaking human rights law?

I hope you have developed more inclusive values since then. The lack of flexibility and inclusion you showed me still makes me angry. The personal is political.

What is your capacity to evolve? How do you relate to screaming inside a storage room where no one can hear your cries? Living with chronic illness is hard without being deprived of equal opportunities.

Regards (disappointed as fuck),

Katrine

It matters that we care, it matters that we feel, and it matters that we listen.

IV drips with electrolytes fueling homemade battery and rectangular LED light bulb.

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## *Heartbeats*

Katrine Spilling

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*Happy Again* VHS video stills

Alice Walter

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All works produced in 2020

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