

***a celebration of Black femhood***



# **t h i s   z i n e**

was born out of the need for a celebration of Black femininity.

despite the many systems created to undermine our worth, agency and presence,

**we exist. we shine. we thrive.**

eclipse is a rallying call to displace the poisonous, anti-Black beliefs we have been fed for so long

**and revel at who we really are.**

I am privileged to be able to create this and other forms of art on the traditional territories and stolen land of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe, and Neutral Peoples (particularly Halidmand Treaty territory in Brantford, ON).

the relationship between displaced Black peoples and the original inhabitants of Turtle Island is complex and critical. it is painful to witness what colonialism has done and continues to do to our senses of home, the body, and land near and far.

this project is an act of joyful reclamation, and I hope to continue curating such spaces alongside and in solidarity with our Indigenous kin.



**DEBBS**

**SHE/HER • 20 • BLACK**



## "IT'S ME!! AND I'M PROUD OF ME!!"

### **WHAT ABOUT YOUR BLACKNESS AND/OR GENDER EXPRESSION BRINGS YOU JOY?**

I've struggled with my Black identity since I was kid. It wasn't until I entered my first year of college that I began to embrace myself, my hair, and my skin. It was liberating. It was even more liberating to find out that Black people aren't a monolith and if I liked dark clothes or enjoy the cottage core aesthetic, it didn't make me less Black, y'know? And delving more into the alternative Black culture/movement really helped me see just how diverse and honestly amazing Black people are in different scenes and aesthetics.



### **WHAT 3 WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF?**

Lovely, calm and pretty.



### **WHAT ADVICE ABOUT SELF-IMAGE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF?**

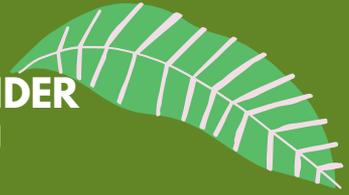
To stop hiding your hair under hats and hoodies. To stop alienating yourself from other Black people in order to be the token Black person in the room or among friend groups. That it's ok to like girly things and clothes and that once you know how to care for your hair, it becomes really really simple to take care of, and you begin to enjoy it also.

**JEL**

**SHE/HER • LIVING IN TORONTO, BORN IN  
LAGOS, NIGERIA • BLACK • CIS WOMAN**



## WHAT ABOUT YOUR BLACKNESS AND/OR GENDER EXPRESSION BRINGS YOU JOY?



My joy in being a Black woman comes from my intersectionality, and my strength and resilience demonstrated through my ability to continuously overcome various obstacles/barriers.



## WHAT 3 WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF?

Ambitious, humane and kind.



## WHAT ADVICE ABOUT SELF-IMAGE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF?

If I could go back in time, I would tell my younger self not to compare herself to anyone, I would remind her how beautiful her difference is, and how capable and deserving she is.



## **WHAT ABOUT YOUR BLACKNESS AND/OR GENDER EXPRESSION BRINGS YOU JOY?**

As a black woman, you have to persevere through so much criticism: from the world, the women before us and ourselves. Although I wish the world treated us more kindly, I have come to appreciate certain things that are beyond my control. We have been taught to strive for perfection in various aspects of lives: career, relationships and image. We have been taught to distort ourselves to please. We have learnt to fit in molds not created for us, because they are too small. We have become experts in compliance. We are over sexualized but not desirable. We are to be submissive yet we are expected to lead and take care of our nations with out taking credit for it. We are seen as the victims that deserve the crime.

In the fight to be these divine and pristine beings with the inevitable factors of being merely human, I have come to embrace my imperfections, acknowledge my strengths and focus on my vision. This acceptance in itself is a form of protest and a space for healing. Kindness begins from within. Black women are such powerful beings to me, so I see why they've made it so hard for us. The world cannot understand how we possess all this magic. They know about it, and so should we. My blackness brings me joy because I know I am not alone in this struggle. I have the support of fantastic black women who roam this earth with me. My blackness is my superpower. Putting me down only makes me fight harder.

## **WHAT 3 WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF?**

Creative, intuitive and hopeful.

## **WHAT ADVICE ABOUT SELF-IMAGE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF?**

Remember the story of the man, his son and their donkey? Also, do you know what they say about empty vessels? People tend to project their inner insecurities through unsolicited advice, and as a child who is taught to obey, these distractions bring about long-term destruction. I would tell my younger self to be kind and to believe in myself. I am perfectly created for a specific purpose.



**KIKI**

**SHE/HER • FROM LAGOS, LIVING IN TORONTO •  
BLACK-AFRICAN**

# RUTH MARIE

SHE/HER • 37 • ANISHINABEWAKI (OTTAWA) •  
BIRACIAL • CIS WOMAN



## "SELF-REGARD, EARLY EVENING", 2021

### **WHAT ABOUT YOUR BLACKNESS AND/OR GENDER EXPRESSION BRINGS YOU JOY?**

Almost everything. We are so beautiful and talented! I am so fortunate to live in this body. I know my joy is the result of women whose love led to my being. I have softness and ease because of their hard work. I smile to think of quietly sulking while Granny combed my hair out. Now I love the delicate nature of my hair. It prompts me to nourish the rest of my body carefully, to gently embrace change. I appreciate growing older, how I sink deeper into my own femininity. Shed the layers of what I've been told and what's expected of me.

### **WHAT 3 WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF?**

Restless, tender-hearted dreamer.

### **WHAT ADVICE ABOUT SELF-IMAGE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF?**

It's okay. Who you are as a whole person is wonderful and lovely. Don't worry about what you look like or what you are physically able to do, these things will change with time anyways. Your soul remains the same.

**ayan nur**

**SHE/THEY • AFRICAN-CANADIAN •  
NONBINARY BLACK WOMAN**



# "LATE NIGHT ATTEMPT @ GENDER EUPHORIA"

## WHAT ABOUT YOUR BLACKNESS AND/OR GENDER EXPRESSION BRINGS YOU JOY?

Community, connection, curiosity about my individual experiences and distinct familial heritage as well as how I'm tied to other Black people, particularly in the diaspora. I love us.

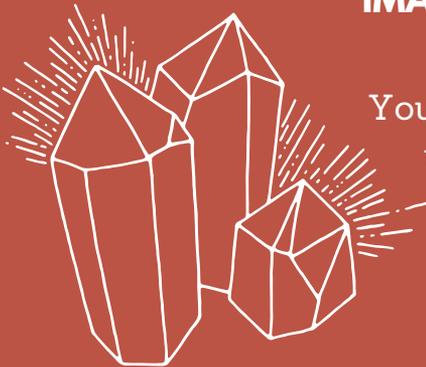


## WHAT 3 WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF?

Cautious, militantly empathetic.

## WHAT ADVICE ABOUT SELF-IMAGE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF?

Your body is yours, she works tirelessly and lovingly as a vessel for you alone.



## "golden hour"

### WHAT ABOUT YOUR BLACKNESS AND/OR GENDER EXPRESSION BRINGS YOU JOY?

One of my favorite things about my Black-Puerto Rican-ness is that my skin looks so great in the sun. Sometimes I feel like the sun is glowing from within me, in a way. My ancestors thrived in the sun and my skin is a reflection of that.

As far as my gender expression goes, I love being the epitome of Black femme softness. My soul feels the best when my hair is pink & soft, I have some cute accessories on and I'm wearing an awesome outfit.

### WHAT 3 WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF?

Warm, intuitive and soft.



### WHAT ADVICE ABOUT SELF-IMAGE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF?

That's an interesting question actually! I've been doing a lot of work to heal from a difficult past lately. One aspect of that is being kinder to my younger self. I'd tell her to be her most favorite self, regardless of what other people think. That's doing whatever makes her happy and content, whether it's making art, wearing cute things or spending time in nature.



# SABRINA SIMS

SHE/HER • 26 • BORN AND LIVING IN THE BRONX, NY •  
AFRO PUERTO RICAN-CUBAN • WOMAN



**NIARA**

**SHE/HER • MULTI-ETHNIC BLACK • WOMAN**



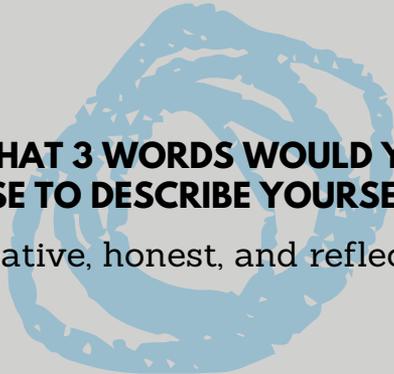
## "BREATHE THROUGH MY SKIN"



### WHAT ABOUT YOUR BLACKNESS AND/OR GENDER EXPRESSION BRINGS YOU JOY?



My connection to my ancestors, my beautiful melanated skin that looks good in vibrant colours, and the many genres of Black music that connect me to the joy of folks from across the diaspora.



### WHAT 3 WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF?

Creative, honest, and reflective.

### WHAT ADVICE ABOUT SELF-IMAGE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF?

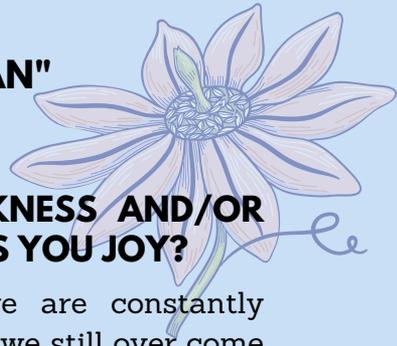
I would tell myself that it takes time to unlearn all the negative messages that I have spent years absorbing. That being kind to yourself is the only way to feel better about yourself - you wouldn't let anyone else tell you what you tell yourself every day. And I would say that I don't need to feel beautiful to be valid and worthy.

**SHANELLE**

**SHE/HER • 27 • BLACK**



# "DIVINE WOMAN"

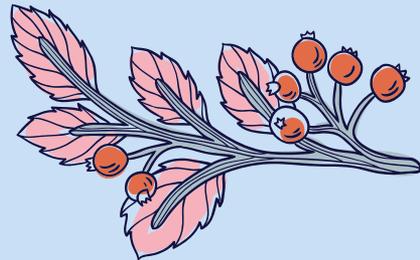


## **WHAT ABOUT YOUR BLACKNESS AND/OR GENDER EXPRESSION BRINGS YOU JOY?**

The way that even though we are constantly oppressed as a black community we still overcome our oppressors. The way my skin glows instantly in the sun. The beauty of our hair and the way it's able to be manipulated into so many dazzling styles and designs. The fact that I am born with the eye gene and able to produce children of different skin tones, eye colours and sometimes even hair textures different than my own.

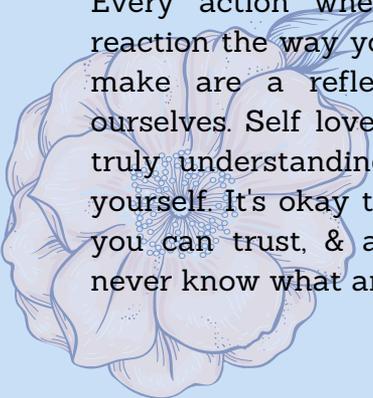
## **WHAT 3 WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE YOURSELF?**

Magical, fascinating and conscience.



## **WHAT ADVICE ABOUT SELF-IMAGE WOULD YOU GIVE TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF?**

That it doesn't matter what others think of you. You are the creator of the life you want to live. Every action whether it's good or bad has a reaction the way you live your life. The choices we make are a reflection of how much we love ourselves. Self love is so incredibly important and truly understanding what it means to fully love yourself. It's okay to ask for help from people who you can trust, & always have faith because you never know what amazing opportunity awaits you!





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