

**Aida Wilde & Ego Ahaiwe Sowinski**  
**London and Mni Sota**

# 'Notes from a Phantom'

This collection of narratives/poems and 'call to action' are based upon observations, conversations, and memories that took place during the UK lockdown in 2020.

The pieces were made for and exhibited at 'disCONNECT – A 'Locked-Down' Artist Takeover', a transatlantic collaborative endeavour by Schoeni Projects and HKwalls who commissioned ten international urban artists to transform a Victorian townhouse in South West London. Their works were on display in July and August 2020.



'Notes From a Phantom'. Screen print on lace. Aida Wilde & Ego Ahaiwe Sowinski, 2020. Photograph ©Aida Wilde & Ego Ahaiwe Sowinski.

The white lace curtains for the artwork were salvaged from the street in Hackney Wick, East London, during the mass pandemic spring clean that took place during the height of lockdown. They begin with the words 'Day 00' in reference to the first official day living our 'New Normal' lives under what felt like a house arrest, patiently or impatiently waiting for instructions from our leaders in what actions and precautions we were supposed to be taking. The texts are based on the endlessly drilling and repetitive government guidelines on washing hands, staying at home and saving lives. Other observations include the loo roll panic and the cosmic collective consciousness that was baking banana bread and using Zoom. Composed in the midst of a global pandemic and an uprising, the narrative's hint of darkness and ironic plot descends into heaviness, ending with a penultimate of conversations between Wilde and her long time art college friend and artistic collaborator, the artist and archivist Ego Ahaiwe Sowinski, who is now based in Minneapolis.

The two pieces with their grey texts are screen printed onto black lace, reminiscent of traditional mourning funeral veil covering, and are a reference to the unlawful murder of George Floyd, and many others, in the US and the Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests that took place following Floyd's killing. They speak about the importance and the power of 'Stillness and Silence' from the maddening world around them. So much noise – white noise. It is hard to hear yourself think. There is contemplation, reflection, and gathering of thoughts within the silence. This was a direct and hard-hitting response from Wilde to the inherent institutional racism and what now appears the scrambling of panic-written empty statements that were issued by many people regarding BLM. The question that kept going around both the artists' heads was WHY, WHY NOW? WHY NOW?



**DAY 00  
2020.  
CRISIS. WASH  
YOUR HANDS  
CRISIS. STAY  
AT HOME. CRI  
SIS. SAVE LIV  
ES. CRISIS. ZE  
RO'S TO HERO  
MASK ON. PA  
NIC. LOO ROLL  
PANIC. LOO RO  
LL. SHIT. PANIC**

**DISTANCE SO  
CIALLY. 2M X  
2M. HEARD H  
YPE, ZOOM. BA  
KE/ON/BANAN  
A/ BREAD/ ZO  
OM, ZOOM IN  
THE ROOM. LI  
FE NEW/NOR  
MAL/ MESSN  
ESS. HEALTH,  
BUT IT'S ABO  
UT WEALTH.**



**GEORGE CRIED  
D 'I CAN'T BREATH'  
TAKE A KNEE| THERE IS  
STILLNESS IN SILENCE|  
CLARITY IN SILENCE| AS  
LOUD AS THE SILENCE  
THAT HAD BEEN DEAFENING  
& MY SISTER SAID TO ME**

**2020  
VISIONS  
WHAT DO WE WANT?  
WE NEED NEW STRATEGIES  
NOT MORE TRAGEDIES  
WE NEED NEW STRATEGIES  
NOT MORE TRAGEDIES  
AND WHEN DO WE WANT IT?  
NOW!**

**EGO AHAIWE SOWINSKI**



Ego Ahaiwe Sowinski is a London and Mni Sota based, mixed-media artist/designer, archivist, and organiser. Her work investigates archives in relation to African diaspora communities in Britain and throughout the world, often theorising and sharing her ideas on archives as spaces of therapy. She was a founding member of X Marks The Spot, an art, archives, and research group that produced a publication called *Human Endeavour: A Creative Finding Aid for the Women of Colour Index*. Ahaiwe Sowinski is a member of the Remembering Olive Collective 2.0. She is also the archivist for the Rita Keegan Archive Project, working with artist Rita Keegan, to prepare her papers for deposit at the Women's Art Library.

Aida Wilde is an Iranian born, London-based printmaker/visual artist, and educator. Wilde's predominantly diverse screen-printed indoor/outdoor installations and social commentary artworks have been featured on city streets and galleries around the world and are responsive works on gentrification, education, and equality. She has been an associate lecturer and course director (2004-2015) at the Surface Design and Foundation of Applied Arts at the London College of Communication, University of the Arts, of which she is also an alumna. Wilde's serigraphs have been exhibited in the UK and beyond, including at the Victoria & Albert Museum, Women's Art Library, Goldsmiths, Vienna's Fine Art Academy, Somerset House, and Saatchi Gallery.