

Artist Statement

I explore the fragility of memory through different photographic mediums to create a personal narrative about how my ever-changing relationship with my childhood and my home informs the role that my chosen family has in my life. My practice began as a documentary photographer, using wide-angle lenses and an external flash to shine a light on people of color. In my first series, Believe in You and Yours, I captured community and joy to make space for positive narratives surrounding minorities. Through this, I found community, and the recurring characters in these series had become a reflection of the important people in my life. After that, my work developed into a personal exploration of how I see my friends and community and my idea of "family."

I explore the idea of family through both my current portraiture and a body of work that is primarily vernacular images from my childhood. My ongoing exploration of 19th-century mixed media practices has evolved into a series that uses cyanotype, ammonia, tissue paper, fabric, pressed paper, thread, and found objects to explore my history through memory. The fragility of the tissue paper represents how temporal our memory is, but with each layer, I intentionally manipulated the chemicals or the materials to emulate missing or changed relationships. This process allowed a new iteration of my grief to emerge with each layer, making each piece a sacred part of my narrative. The series grew into an altar that turned the wash of blues and violets into a vulnerable reconciliation with my childhood and the acceptance that my past and present are ephemeral.

This reconciliation changed my relationship with documentation and gave me the need to reclaim my point of view and cement my present in history. My practice became portraiture that evokes a sense of family and belonging. I began taking staged photographs at dusk and dawn with a flash to shine a soft light on their faces and a 50mm macro lens to be close to my subjects, cementing our intimate relationship in time. As someone who struggles to verbalize deep emotions, my camera has become my voice, and these portraits are the other half of these intimate conversations. Each image is a letter explaining how meaningful that moment and person is in my life and an unguarded representation of how deeply I care for these people, fostering an immediate emotional connection to each photograph. My photography has developed into a vulnerable depiction of myself through how I see the people in my chosen family and how they have become my whole world.