



November 1, 2068

**IT WAS BLACK,  
IN THE END.**

**BLACK PEOPLE.  
BLACK POWER.  
BLACK MAGIC.**

We started a revolution with our Indigenous siblings and siblings of colour and we went out in the blackest of nights and lit fires of resistance.

Fifty years ago we stopped the ghastly Black Death Spectacle spread across all media by taking to the fight for our people. We fought and we won. As Assata Shakur said we would. And we began rebuilding our communities, creating a society rooted in the self determination of all living beings.

50 years ago, before the fires of change spread rapidly across this continent, visual artist Syrus Marcus Ware travelled to the west part of Turtle Island to research black and trans histories in this place. To explore the archives of our lives. What you see here is the results of some off this research, a drawn archive created 50 years ago, an archive that remains here in 2068.





WE HAVE GATHERED TO REMEMBER THE PAST,  
REMEMBER OUR ANCESTORS WHO FOUGHT  
FOR TRANS RIGHTS, DISABILITY JUSTICE,  
BLACK JUSTICE AND FOR FREEDOM. WE  
GATHER TO REMEMBER A TIME WHEN THINGS  
WEREN'T ROOTED IN BLACK POWER AS THEY  
ARE TODAY A TIME WHEN THE NORTH PART  
OF TURTLE ISLAND WAS THE GREAT WHITE  
NORTH FOR MANY AND WHERE DIFFERENCE  
WAS MARGINALIZED.

WE GATHER TO REMEMBER THESE TIMES SO  
THAT WE MAY NEVER REPEAT THEM. SO THAT  
WE CAN REMAIN FIRMLY IN THE NOW AND  
OUR FUTURES AHEAD OF US—FUTURES OF  
BLACK, QUEER, CRIP JOY; FUTURES WHERE  
WE STAY IN THE CENTRES AND THERE ARE NO  
MORE MARGINS.

THIS ARCHIVE OF OUR PAST, OF 2018, OF  
2025, OF THESE KEY MOMENTS IN OUR  
PEOPLE’S TRAJECTORY, THIS ARCHIVE IS  
YOURS, IT IS ALL OF OURS. WE MUST PUT  
OUR HANDS ON THE ARCHIVES, AS WE  
REMEMBER WHAT HAS HAPPENED HERE,  
IN THIS PLACE.

ALL POWER TO ALL PEOPLE,  
THEN AND NOW

I met Maria on Salt Spring Island after an epic day finding great clues to some of the underground Black history of the island. We decided to stop in one more place and I met her, and made a date then and there to visit her witchy-treehouse type home and take these pictures. I remember her partner, their baby crawling around, red and yellow leaves everywhere, and the smell of warm stew on a wood stove.

I met Miski under the heat of the California sun on a sojourn from my research. Where are you from became complex as they were from Toronto, my hometown, but lived in the midwest USA. We sat in a yard built by white liberal hipsters, with a woodshop in the back, orange and pear trees growing and bearing fruit and chickens running free, our Airbnb hosts happily absent.

I met Troy and El Farouk separately, Troy through art and El Farouk through politics. We all loved cats and art and activism and Black lives and we stayed up very late talking politics one night in their drawing room, a deep colour I forget now, on a settee from the '40s. We all became parents, and wrote kid's books and raised queer families in downtown Toronto. But my memory of Troy and El Farouk is of them at home, in Vancouver. Troy working till the wee hours, El Farouk with his parents still living out west. Of them in their brightly coloured ever-fashionable clothes standing out against the wet green of Vancouver November, at Main and Fraser.

I met megahn in the rain, on the back porch of a Black activist retreat; we'd both gone in search of smoke medicine in the overgrown back garden. They were so kind and so funny and real. They played me some of the music they were creating and I was blown away by their brilliance. We ate greasy spoon breakfast together – eggs and diced potatoes – and I took some photos of them. The ceiling of my Airbnb was so low their head nearly touched, but they just quietly stayed ducked and didn't mention it.

I met !Kona on a brief trip to Vancouver. At a dinner party with too much delicious food, we laughed and shared stories and figured out all of the people that we knew in common. We took selfies together and texted said friends, Hey! We are together! Hi!. Funnier to us than them, for certain, but we did it anyway. When we met again !Kona and I spent a night experimenting with glitter and make up and head scarves as we shared a house with 10 other Black activists from across the country, gathered in Vancouver. I asked !Kona to come to Toronto and it seemed unreal to have her there, bringing her sensibilities to a Toronto context. We sat under large trees in a sunny park and dreamed out loud about resistance, revolution and black magic.

I met Dainty in a dark nightclub owned by a trans comedian that was up three flights of steep stairs at the bottom on Church Street in Toronto. I met Kyisha on a white sand beach in Barbados, the sun beating down on us, sipping ginger beer and rum. I didn't even know they knew each other at first. When I asked them if I could take photos of them together talking about activism, time travel and love, they agreed excitedly. Dainty, growing up in southern Ontario and Kyisha, two generations strong in Vancouver and the west coast. Both fierce Black people who were using their art to fight for change in this wicked world. I had asked for Greg Staats to take their photos for me, something he so graciously offered. I ended up drawing from the outtake photos snapped with my phone while they were talking about love.

I met Omisoore across a boardroom table, working on a large scale queer conference in Toronto that would bring people from across Turtle Island to the province. We were the only Black people on the committee, which was business as usual in queer organizing in Toronto at the time. This was years before she moved west, living in Vancouver and commuting to Victoria on weekends. It's hard to picture Omisoore in the rainy grey months of Vancouver's fall and winter. I wish I had known her when I lived here.

I met Meleisa at the Centre for Women and Trans People, her laugh making the room alive with electricity. Meleisa moved west to Victoria, and would write to me about the cherry blossoms and the rabbits. She eventually moved to an even more rainy climate, setting up shop and starting a family in the UK. I can still hear her laughing, making the meeting so much more fun.

**2068: Touch Change**  
Syrus Marcus Ware  
November 2nd - December 15th, 2018

All images courtesy of Syrus Marcus Ware, 2018.

  
grunt gallery  
350 E 2nd Ave #116  
Vancouver, BC  
grunt.ca