

## Syna-ghetto-sthesia: An Exhibition

### Materials

Displacement from African Kingdoms  
Unknown, Transatlantic Slave Trade,  
Miscegenation, Brick, Glass, Cheap Carpet,  
Cheap Paint, Redlining, White Flight

*It tasted like...*

Red brick with bones that tasted like fever.  
The length is a forever multiplied by the flat  
and hollow of the way pale wheat, thin cheap carpet,  
and 1000 watts of muted incandescent leaves longing  
on the tongue. Belly empty now hollow,  
enough of a skin to stretch and start tappin

*Apartment 2C*

Chains wrapped and hung round necks, the bodies  
dangle from the shine not absent pon ears when  
touched to eyes by passing palms. You be  
in Mississippi, you be in the whistle that never passed  
through lips to touch white female bodies, or you  
be in the land of the true true—that walk, no limpin,  
no pimpin, deliberate. Eyes that touched forgotten  
and made it back in time to show us again. That dip  
in that head tho, like they know tho...

*Apartment 3D*

Bodies the cola of butta, taste like distance taste like  
the way we all watched, *You pretty for a dark girl.*  
*You pretty like Patra.* Taste like the skin and  
good hair of Myra matched base notes of Nicole's silky  
ponytails. As the grown folks said, *They really smellin*  
*themselves*, kinda like the way the other They once said,  
*These are more valuable than those on the auction block*  
But that ain't now. Now you be a bridge to tell us where the exit sign is

*Ms. Topaz, Ms. 4G*

With the family color of slightly burnt sugar cookies  
My face helped her touch home, the way missing  
closes the space between bodies. Her question  
touched my skin then lingered in the hallway  
a lil longer

*In Between: The Hallway & Apartment 3G*

Linger like that song in 3G—that one song bouncing off  
bodies and building, all of us listening to a grown man’s lullaby

*Apartment 2I*

Not like the others above, none below, but in a fold,  
in the jugular notch of the red brick. In the best one only best because...  
the balcony. Vacant because her son hangs somewhere from a place  
in here that can’t hold the dead weight of a grown man

*Apartment 1D*

Faint cigarette smells are a soft caramel color  
in a silver wig, innocuous, quiet, a petite frail secret

*It sounded like....*

Permanent press rising off a woman’s slip and a man’s  
work pants in the dryer while Mrs. R is at work  
Bitterslight sweet footsteps of the 95% chocolate  
non-organic Taza bar and her growing stomach  
from a husband gone missing

*A Drowning & Apartment 4G Bearing Witness*

**Materials**

A Sunday Morning, A single Mother  
with Two Children, and A Grandma with a .22

Mahalia Jackson's voice in 4G, the hallway pounding with the  
mother of a baby left alone in a tub, all held by grits, sausage,  
and Sunday's morning.

What open car doors and Grandma's .22  
pointing at those drunk fools looks like from  
the 4<sup>th</sup> floor later that day

The way rubber and the heat from the engine  
from a milk run made over four hours ago stays in the air

*Last Scenes of Syna-ghetto-sthesia*

Looked like the cacophony of a dude named after a  
brand after a sport he'll never play, the sweet and  
bitter lemonhead on taste buds that made girls like  
me wanna be her,  
or wanna be that folding table that held the the  
bodies of teen love in the laundry room

The way echoes bounced from bathrooms from  
barricades upon faces from a night out we weren't  
supposed to see

What *NO* feels like through cheap metal doors, what  
*Another Bad Creation* tates like in the Valley of Lost  
Kings and blind Queens, or maybe  
just a bunch of niggas from around the way

The visible invisible on our bodies,  
cars filled and unfilled in the parking lot of the  
red brick whose bones tasted like the fever we  
caught