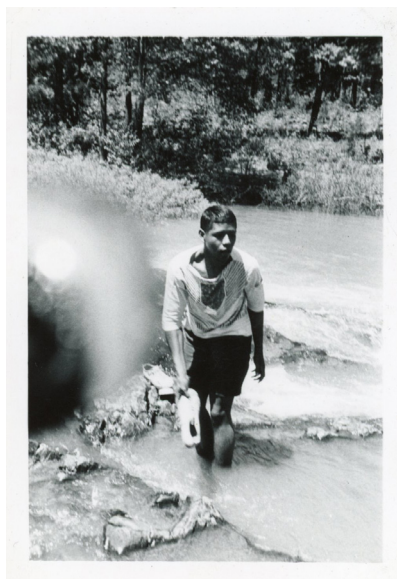


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In Iterations and Assemblage, J.J. Adams Confronts Privilege and Race Play in Evolving Identities

J.J. Adams: *Flowers In Temporary Hands*

January 29-June 5, 2022

CLEVELAND, March 3, 2022—Cleveland, March 3, 2022 – In their first solo show, J.J. Adams's *Flowers In Temporary Hands* confronts privilege and race play in the assemblage of their identity. J.J. Adams presents four distinct experience iterations—an artist book, video performance, sound, and sculptural landscape to form *Flowers In Temporary Hands*. Culling from deeply personal, post-generational trauma and memories, their work abstractly layers images as the language that forms their perspective.

Through a staircase soundscape, moCa audiences are guided into a layered installation of images mounted on a labyrinthine chain-link fence to confront an echo of the artist's most significant period of detainment as a teenage child. *Flowers In Temporary Hands* addresses legacy. Adams's photographs from their estranged grandfather's archive, coupled with pages from their teenage journal while institutionalized, and newly produced poems allow audiences to experience a slice of their past.

This distinct assemblage reveals a striking but not uncommon portrait of a boy whose “narrative of self” was shaped by a single white mother. Adams includes a series of tender gestures paired with visceral critical inquiry, sparking conversations that remind those who experience the work that identity, just like history, is both contingent and incomplete. Adams's story bravely shared was built upon a myriad of people, places, and moments in time.

They also present their publication, *Flowers In Temporary Hands*, which holds the same name as their moCa exhibition and pairs images with language to establish a symbolic universe that mixes personal memories, loss, and desire. The book is divided into three sections that address different periods in the artist's life and create a permanent timestamp of a journey towards closure (from the brutal realities of looking for acceptance in all the wrong places).

The Toothpaste Diaries deepen the installation. In them, Adams shares pages of their journal: a collection of drawings, collages, and writing created during a defining moment of teenage incarceration. These richly layered pieces are juxtaposed with works from the Gregory Adams Archive. This collection of black and white photographs taken by the artist's estranged grandfather, and document their own collegial life, from the playing field to the classroom. Poignantly capturing two distinct moments in time, *The Toothpaste Diaries* and the Gregory Adams Archive are threaded together by *Boys Like Us: Part One*, a series of colorful and densely layered poems that reflect on J.J. Adams's past and the construction of memory, family, and identity.

Presented together for the first time in this intimate publication, these bodies of work create a coexistence of time, operating as a tender portrait of an artist whose story continues to unfold.

J.J. Adams is a collaboration of archives by artist Jesse Hoffman and their family.

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About moCa Cleveland:

For more than 50 years, the Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland (moCa) has played a vital role in the city's cultural landscape. A Midwestern, non-collecting contemporary art hub, moCa is a conduit and catalyst for creativity and inspiration, offering exhibitions and programs that provide public value and make meaning of the art and ideas of our time.

Since its founding in 1968, moCa has presented the works of more than three thousand artists, often through artists' first solo shows. Soon after its founding, moCa was the first in the region to exhibit the works of many vanguard artists such as Laurie Anderson, Christo, Jasper Johns, Roy Lichtenstein, Adrian Piper, and Andy Warhol. Recent artist commissions and solo exhibitions include work by Tauba Auerbach, Xavier Cha, Simon Denny, Aleksandra Domanović, Michelle Grabner, Byron Kim, Ragnar Kjartansson, Tony Lewis, Kirk Mangus, Catherine Opie, Adam Pendleton, Sondra Perry, Joyce J. Scott, Do Ho Suh, and Liu Wei, among many others.

Join the conversation #mymoCa.

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