

In the late summer afternoons of 2019, I regularly walked to the archaeological museum in central Athens from the studio where I was undertaking a 5-week residency. From the first visit to the museum, I felt at ease in the collection; amongst friends. Hundreds of statues depicting ancient bodies populating the museum's galleries, most with broken surfaces and sustained losses; lost noses, cocks, fingers, feet, whole arms, whole halves at times. These forms fractured from wear or vandalism, before their museum stasis.

Many of the statues depict the young. *Kouros* (youths, boys, of noble rank) are free-standing nudes. These figures and their female sculptural counterparts *Kore* stand in opposition to the aged, bearded and ripped gods. *Kouros* were typically sculpted from marble yet also rendered in limestone, wood, bronze, ivory and terracotta. However, many, if not most of the original statues have been destroyed, the versions seen in museums worldwide today are typically Roman replicas.

Around the time of visiting the museum, an uncanny trend was developing in big-budget feature films. The use of a technique to digitally alter an actor's face making them appear decades younger; 'de-ageing' or 'youthification'. In some ways, for me, these two temporal narrative occurrences became entwined.

It is commonly considered the word 'youth' describes a time when you are young or the state of being young. It can also define a group of individuals in that state, in the plural form. Contemporary depictions of youth around us seem to point towards extreme anxiety about the state's loss—an ebbing away of the most definitive and urgent version of self. An individual's retrospective desire for youth could be described as wanting an ungraspable, irretrievable thing. This loss signifies something we cannot regain; our un-lived lives, a transgression, a tearing apart of time, a lack of freedom, the loss of innocence and authenticity. Yet I also wish to suggest that this projected youthful state may also be a simulacrum. In his book *Missing Out*, the writer and psychoanalyst Adam Phillips writes of an inherent tragic-comedy in such wanting being at the heart of many grand narratives. Phillips further suggests, if not careful, our whole lives can become projects of recovery or restitution.

My project *Youth in Parts* aims to examine the broken object of youth. The project will begin with questions and conversations around this topic, exploring the historical and contemporary definitions of youth, the history of its depiction and the transgressions created in its absence. I plan to primarily respond to this research by writing a series of 'fragments'. There are many exciting questions to ask about form and fragmentation — broken pieces perpetually referring to a whole, a severed finger refers back to the hand. For Maurice Blanchot, 'Fragment' is "a noun, but possessing the force of a verb". Within my writing, I hope to find analogies in other broken forms; ruptured skin, fragmented bodies, shattered ruins, and various debris.

Kouros statues are the genesis of these ideas, and I see this research as an expanded sculptural project. Perhaps where sculpture has been misplaced or become broken. With this in mind, I plan to develop a typographic font as part of the act of writing, perhaps akin to the catalogued marks scribed along the amputated planes of the statues displayed in the archaeological museum. This and other elements of the project will be supported by several mentors who will enable discussion, critique, and review of the project as it develops. Building on my training, practice and doctoral research in sculpture, the ultimate aim is to create a unique document of gathered scattered parts.

Bio: Jamie George is an artist and writer based in South East London, working with writing, image-making and sculpture. His recent work explores themes of fragmentation, absence and loss and how things fall apart and are reconfigured or reformed; such as objects, places and relationships. Jamie studied Fine Art at Goldsmiths and sculpture at The Slade School of Fine Art. In 2013, he completed a PhD at Cambridge School of Art — researching how sculptures utilise a 'forgetful memory' — a reflexive process of positing, junking and reimagining relationships to cultural information. He has worked on projects, commissions and exhibitions with Jerwood Visual Arts, Glasgow Sculpture Studios, South Kiosk, Drawing Room, SPACE Studios, Showroom, Wysing Arts Centre and Organhaus Gallery (China). In 2012 he was awarded a Gasworks International Fellowship. He was artist-in-resident at Vasl Artist-Collective, Pakistan and in 2014 was awarded a Cocheme Fellowship from Central Saint Martins, UAL, hosted by AIR Studios. In 2018 he was awarded a Jerwood Arts artist bursary. Recent writing has been published by Moxy Magazine and commissioned by Goldsmiths CCA. Jamie is an editor of the online arts platform dreck.co.uk.

Jamie's work has been selected by Catalyst Arts for the OUTPOST Members show 2021 and a recent text will be published also by OUTPOST in their members publication 2021, selected by Rasha Kahil. Jamie will be taking part in the interdisciplinary residency at Hospitalfield, Scotland, in the autumn of 2021.

Youth in Parts – Project Statement

