

This is a large print guide for the artwork in the vitrines in Galleries 1, 2, and 3. The artwork includes photographs, artist statements, exhibition programmes, collages and other examples of Donald Rodney's work. This guide is a tool to support visitors to access the artworks displayed in the vitrines.

Please return this guide to staff at our reception desk.

This artwork references experiences of racism and the plaques contain racist

language. Please ask our team for more information.

All works are courtesy of The Donald Rodney Estate, unless otherwise stated.

Images of the artwork in the vitrine in Gallery 1, (from left to right):



Photograph

of Donald Rodney (c. 1964).



**Photograph of Donald Rodney taken in South
London Gallery (1993).**

Photograph: C Hardcastle.



Photograph of *The Whitest Skin* (1984, lost work).

Mixed media.

Courtesy of the collection of Keith Piper.



Photograph of *If not us, who? If not now, when?* (1985, lost work).

Paint and spray paint on paper pieces.

Courtesy of the collection of Keith Piper.

Donald Rodney *Visceral Canker* Large Print Vitrine Labels



**Artist's statement in the catalogue for *Trent Polytechnic Fine Art Degree Show (1985)*.
Courtesy of the collection of Keith Piper.**

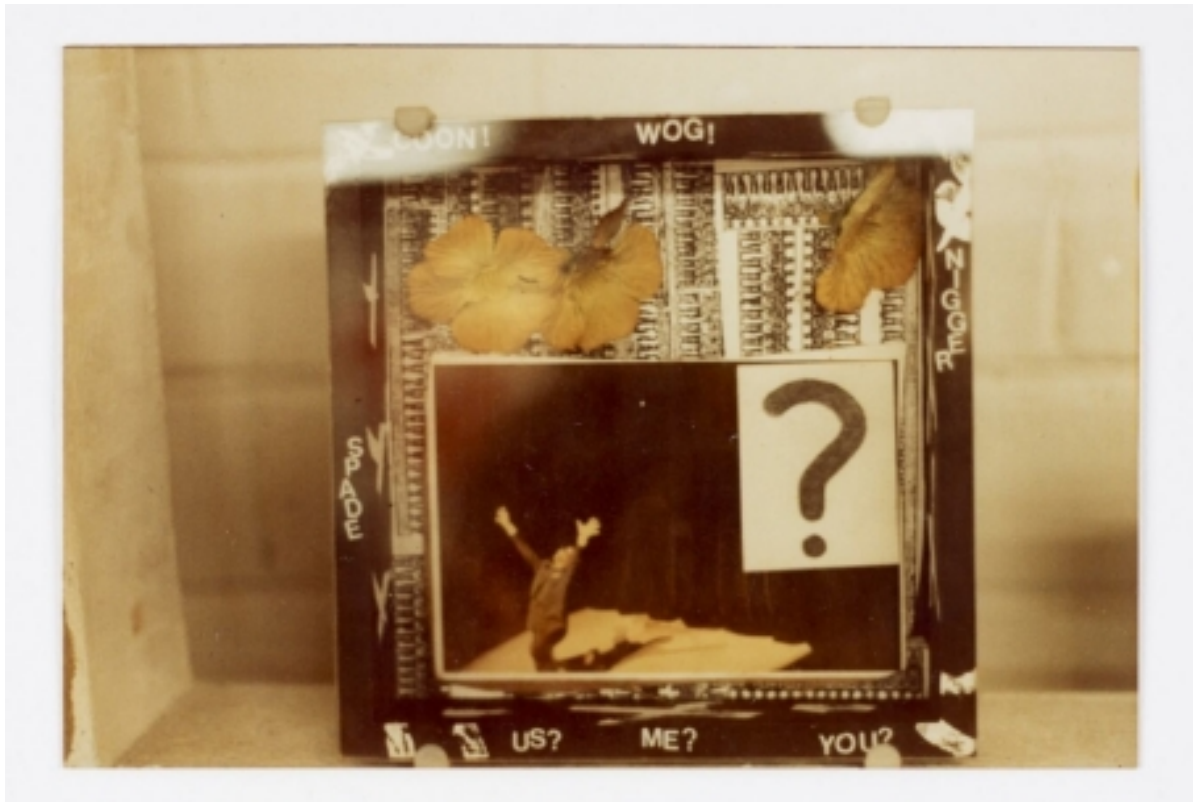


Photograph of *Voyage of My Father* (1985, lost work).

Wallpaper, mirror, plaster hand, matchbox, spray paint.

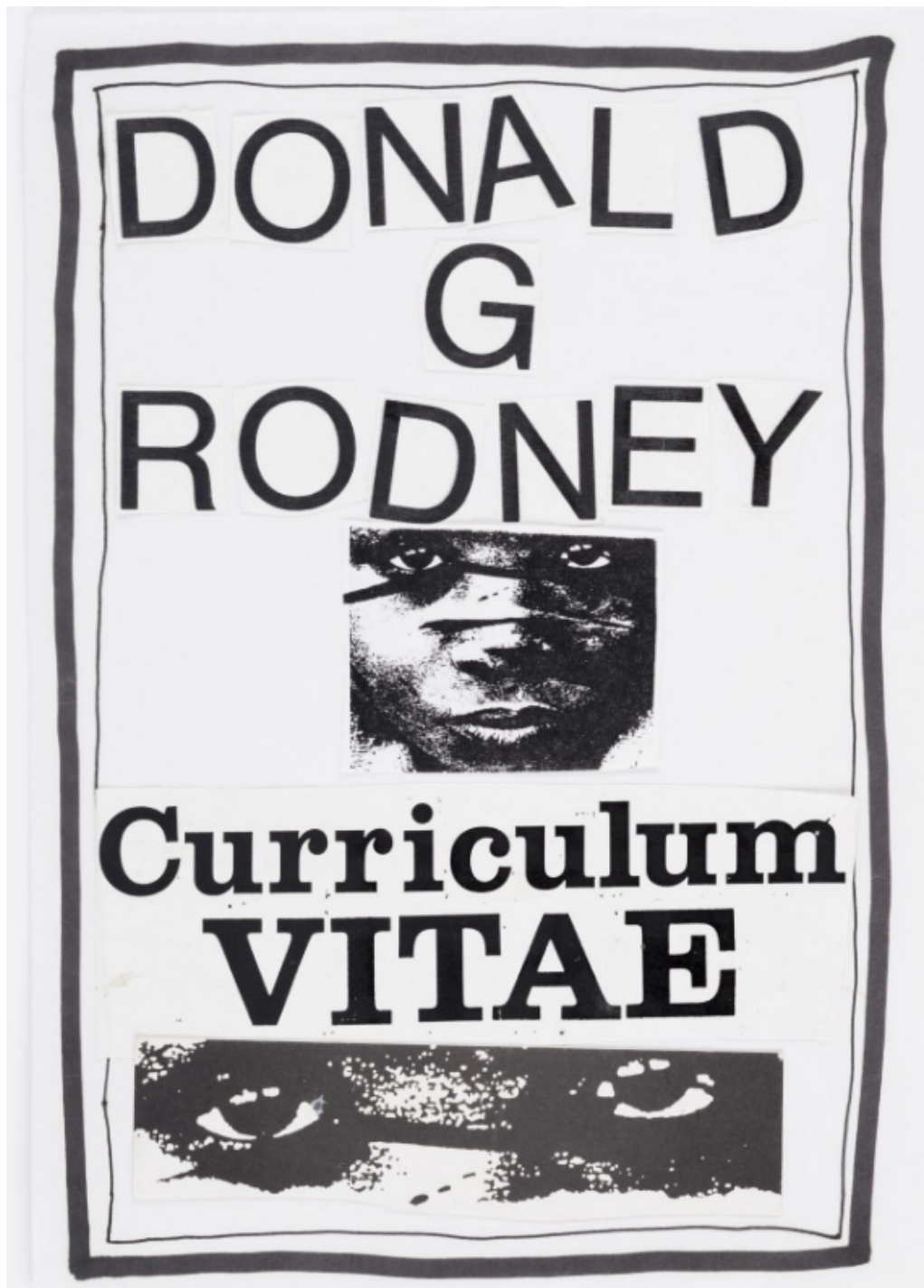
Donald Rodney *Visceral Canker* Large Print Vitrine Labels





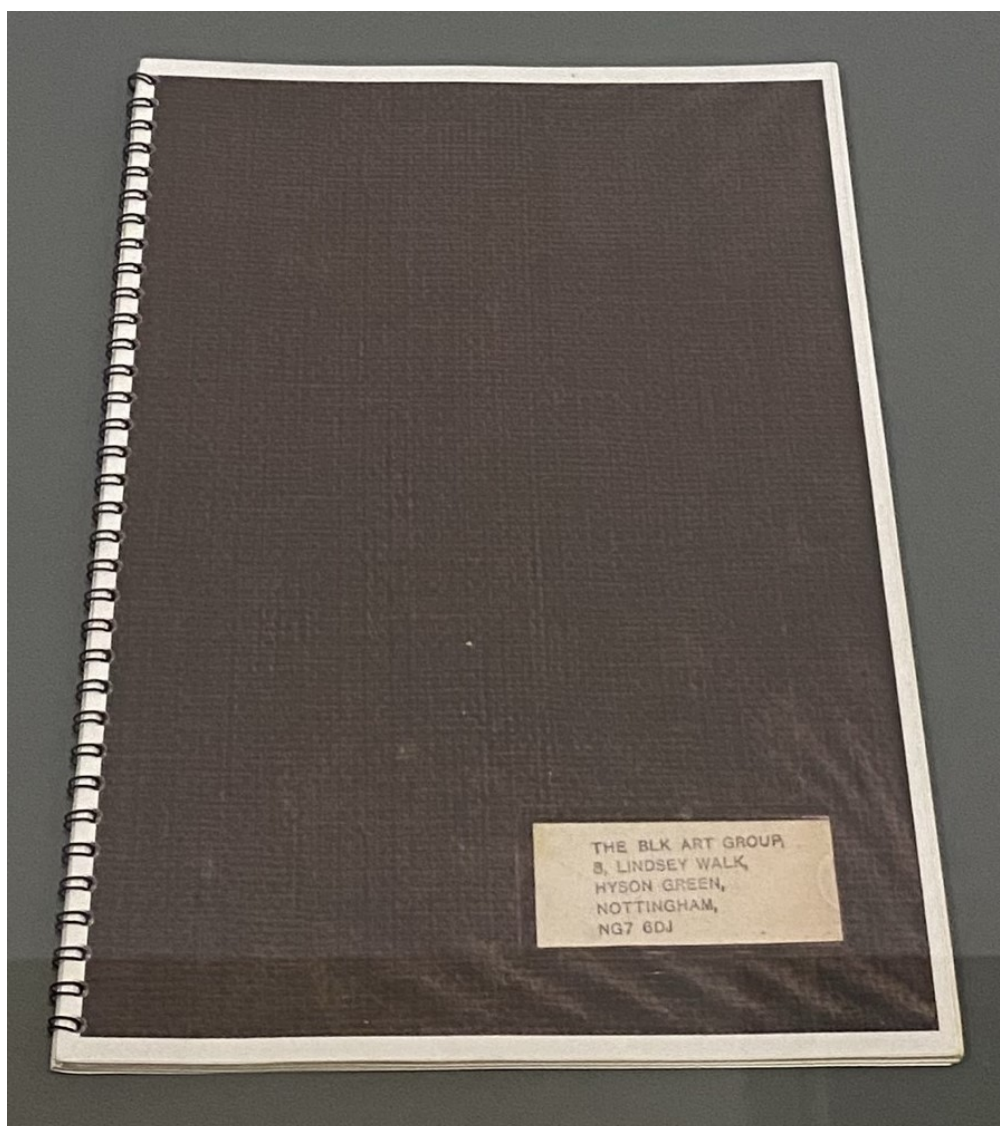
Photographs of *Living Ornaments* (1984, lost work).

Wallpaper, paint, wood, Perspex, boxes with Xerox collage, sheep skull, flashlight bulbs and battery.



Donald Rodney *Curriculum Vitae* (1985).

Xerox collage on paper.

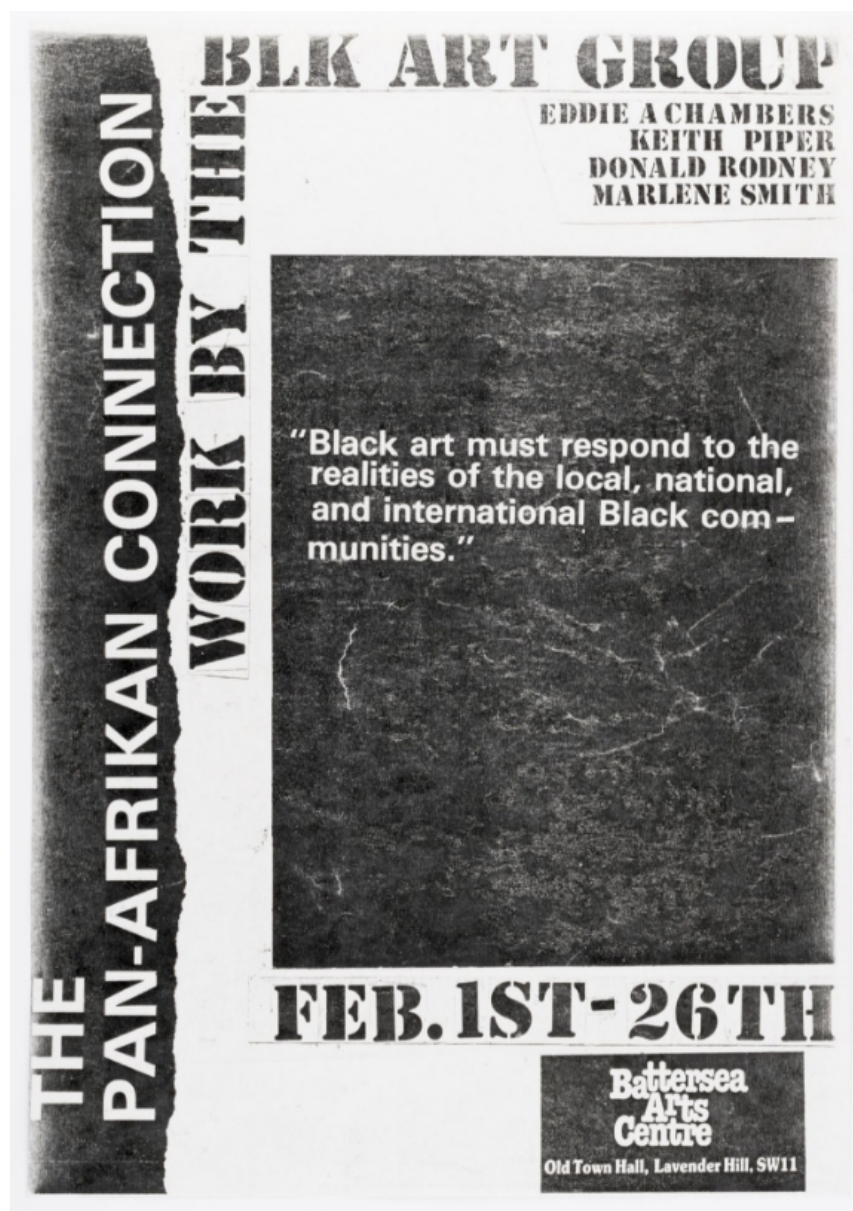


Biographical scrapbook documenting writings

about and the activities of The BLK Art Group

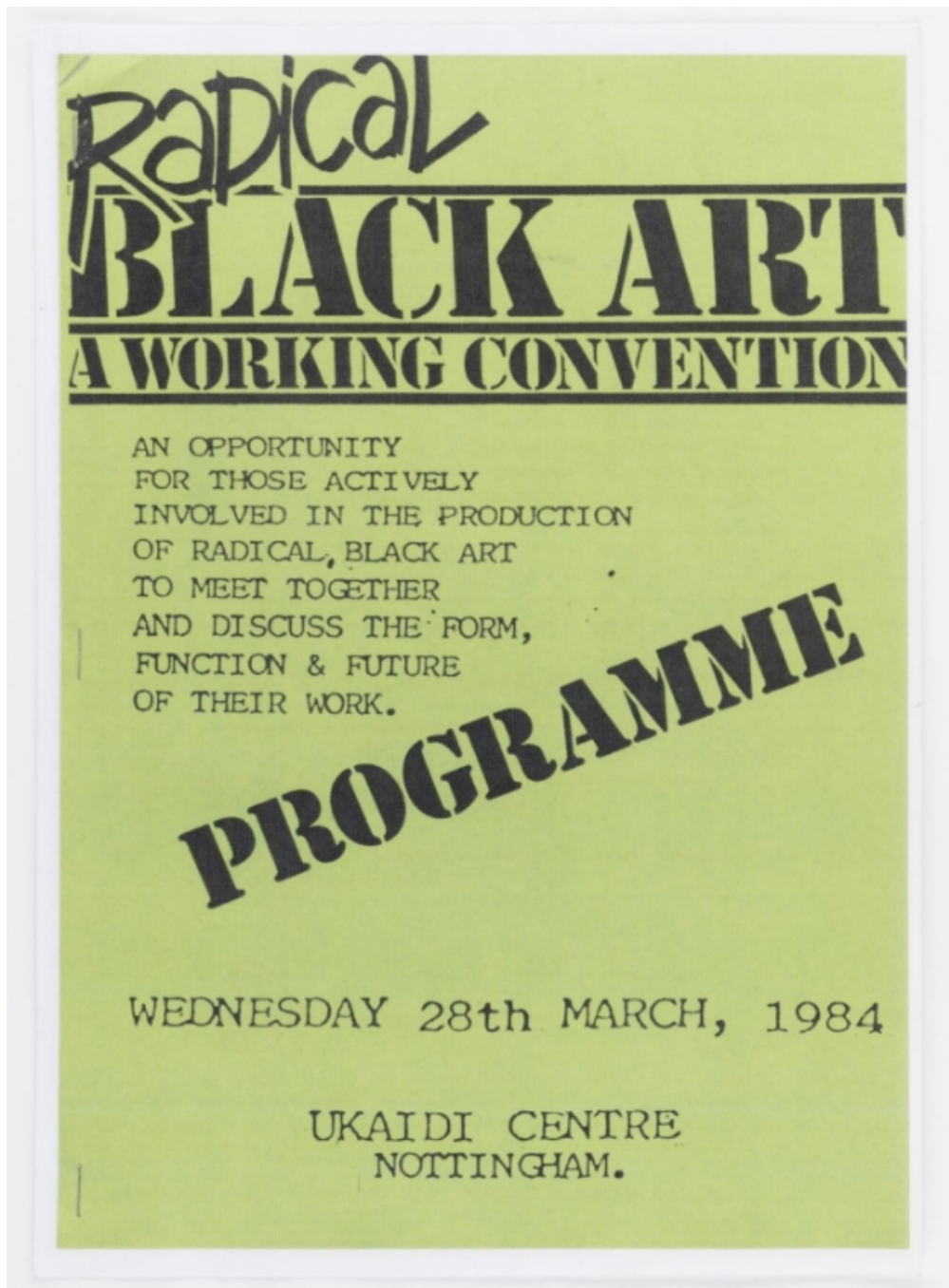
(1983).

Courtesy of the collection of Keith Piper.



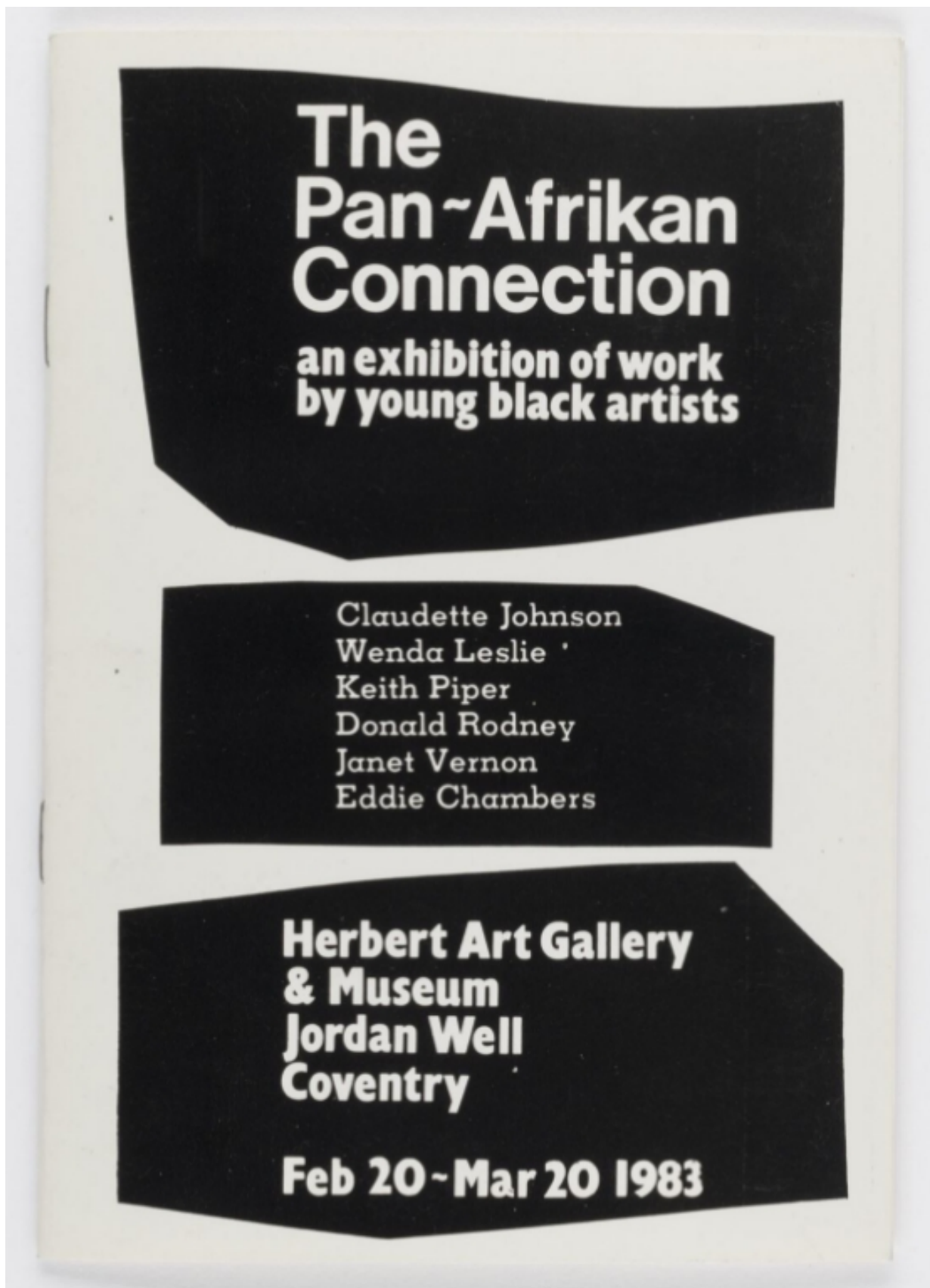
Poster for the exhibition *The Pan-Afrikan Connection: an exhibition by the BLK Art Group* (1983).

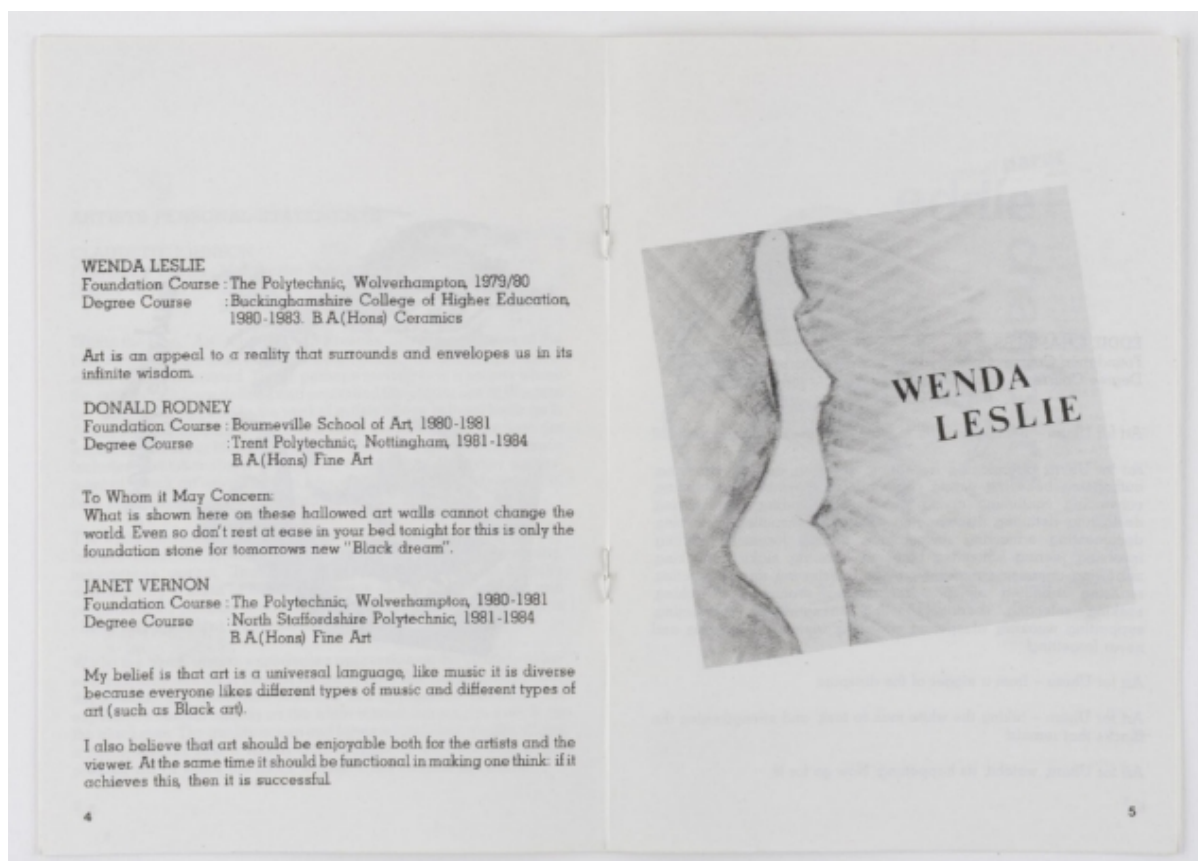
Courtesy of the collection of Keith Piper.



Programme for *Radical Black Art: A Working Convention* (1984).

Courtesy of the collection of Keith Piper.





Programme for the exhibition *The Pan-Afrikan Connection: an exhibition by the BLK Art Group* (1983).

Courtesy of the collection of Keith Piper.

Image 1. Programme closed.

Image 2. Programme open.


Claudette Johnson

born 1959, Manchester
Fine Art, Wolverhampton Polytechnic
Exhibitions include 1980 City Art Gallery Manchester (& Residency), Blackwomen & Creativity The Peoples Gallery, 1985 The Thin Black Line Institute of Contemporary Arts, Celebration & Demonstration St Matthew's Meeting Place Brixton, 1983 Blackwoman Time Now Battersan Arts Centre, 1981-1983 The Pan-African Connection

Within the term 'Art', the work, experiences, culture and values of the Black artist are too often either ignored, obscured, devalued, misrepresented, or misunderstood. This is perhaps inevitable in a society where the criteria that have defined and controlled the production of Western art are blindly applied to the work of artists whose cultural heritage is Asian, African or Caribbean. The work of the Black artist involves the expression of her or his life experience. Here in Britain that experience includes institutionalised racism and class oppression. Any assessment of Black art which fails to acknowledge these factors is at best partial and at worst totally invalid.

White woman, whose creativity and human potential are forcibly limited, distorted, or aborted, by male definitions of her sexuality, experiences sexism. The Black man, who is subtly and brutally degraded by a skein of lies and violence designed to maintain and perpetuate his position of economic vulnerability, where his labour is cheap and abundant, experiences racism.

Whilst the Black woman experiences oppression on the grounds of her sex, sexuality and race, there is not yet a word that properly describes the specific and deliberate nature of this oppression. She does not experience sexism exactly as the White woman nor racism exactly as the Black man. The quality, nature and forms relate to her specifically as a Black woman with a history and struggle of her own. This is the present, out of which the Black woman artist creates her future.



Donald G. Rodney

born 1961, Birmingham
Fine Art, Trent Polytechnic Mixed Media, The Slide (MA)
Exhibitions include 1987 'State Of The Art' Institute of Contemporary Arts and touring, 'The Devil's Fenn' Chelsea School of Art, 1986 The Atrocity Exhibition & Other Empire Stories The Black-Art Gallery, 'Unrecorded Traits' The Elbow Room, 1982-84 The Pan-African Connection

The Language of Art


ART ACCESSIBILITY
 My BLK art has been produced with a myriad of possible functions, one of which is to slip gently into the slot painstakingly constructed for it by many other Black political and cultural workers. Dear Reader, we have known the 20th century has been cursed with an art that cannot be understood. The role of my work (and many of my peers and contemporaries) is to be understood by all folk and not to be cloaked in elitist 'art' mystique. The role of my art is to inform, educate, stimulate and agitate. It is my wish to use accessibility as a weapon of political liberation and subversion through seduction.

BLK ART AND LANGUAGE
 I use the written word and visual metaphor as my political tools. I have no other. The viewer, the reader, the innocent bystander, is coerced gently or bluntly, depending on the subject matter) to take an active part in decoding and reading the visual and written language. History is paraded. The future is speculated on and the present is stripped bare.

BLK ON BLK NOW
 This life we live is increasingly unsure. There is an old Afrikan saying 'Being Black is a high risk occupation'. How true. We live with the sense of impending disaster and that feeling of lurking danger and incipient violence. A close and much valued comrade and I wrote these final words:

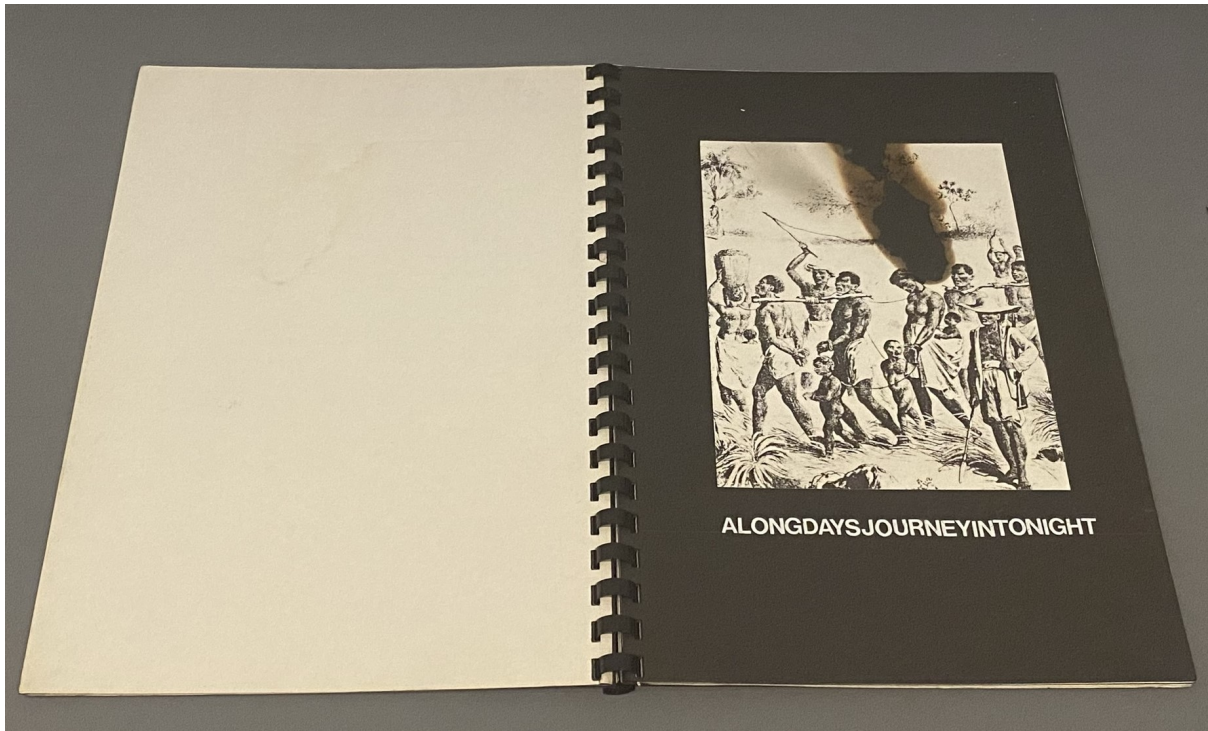
**"The further the landslide
 The deeper the blue
 The wider the powers
 The tighter the screw"**

Black art practice takes in the cares, the fears of Black life. I hope you understand.



Artist's statement in *The Image Employed: the use of narrative in Black art* (1987).

Courtesy of the collection of Keith Piper.



Prince of Darkness Book (1987)

**Xerox copies and Letraset. Part of an
installation for the Slade School of Art,
Postgraduate Degree Show.**





Photographs of *Untitled* (1984, lost work).

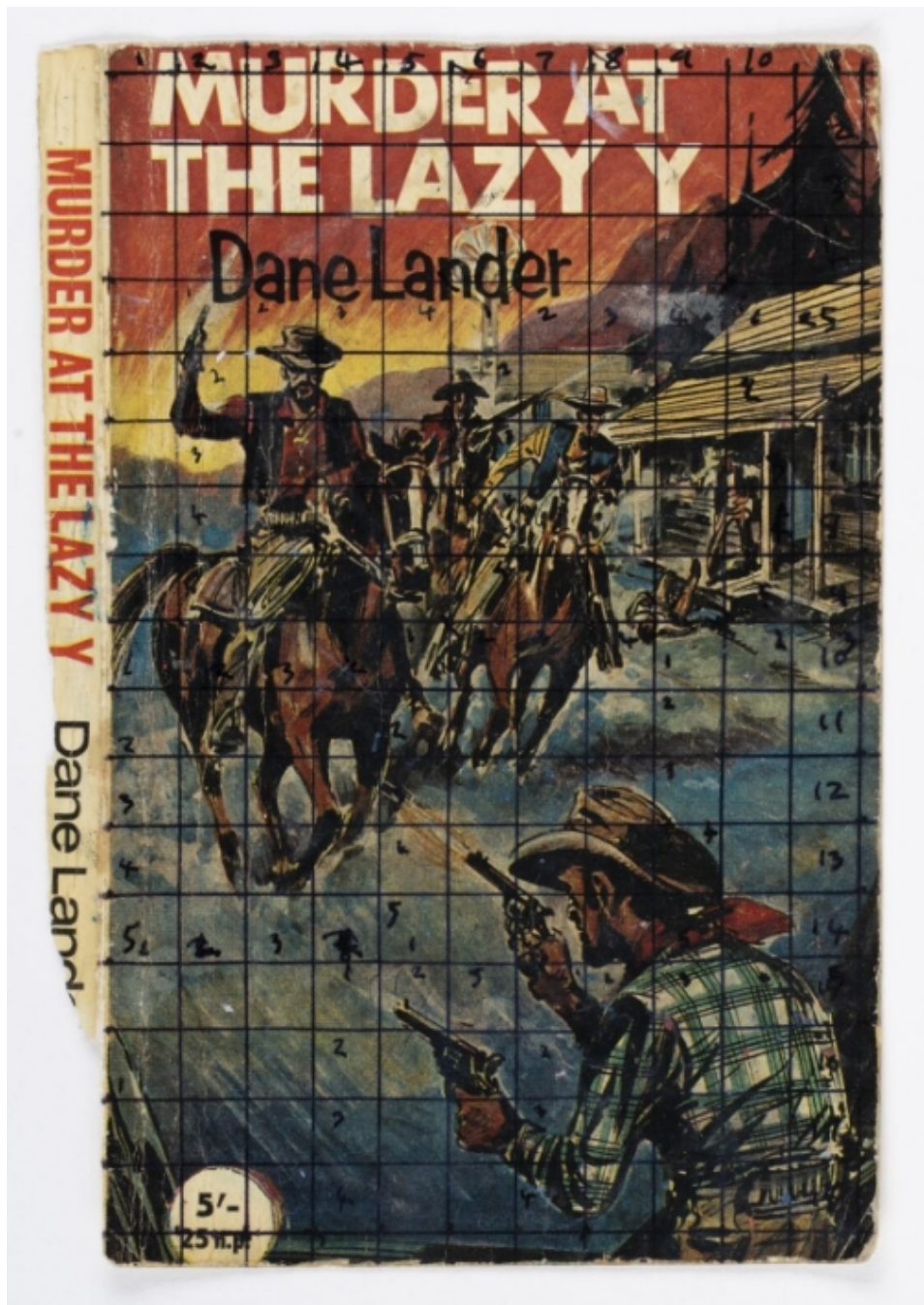
Spray paint, colour photocopy with text, 14
plaster casts of Mickey Mouse spray painted,
smashed, and defaced.



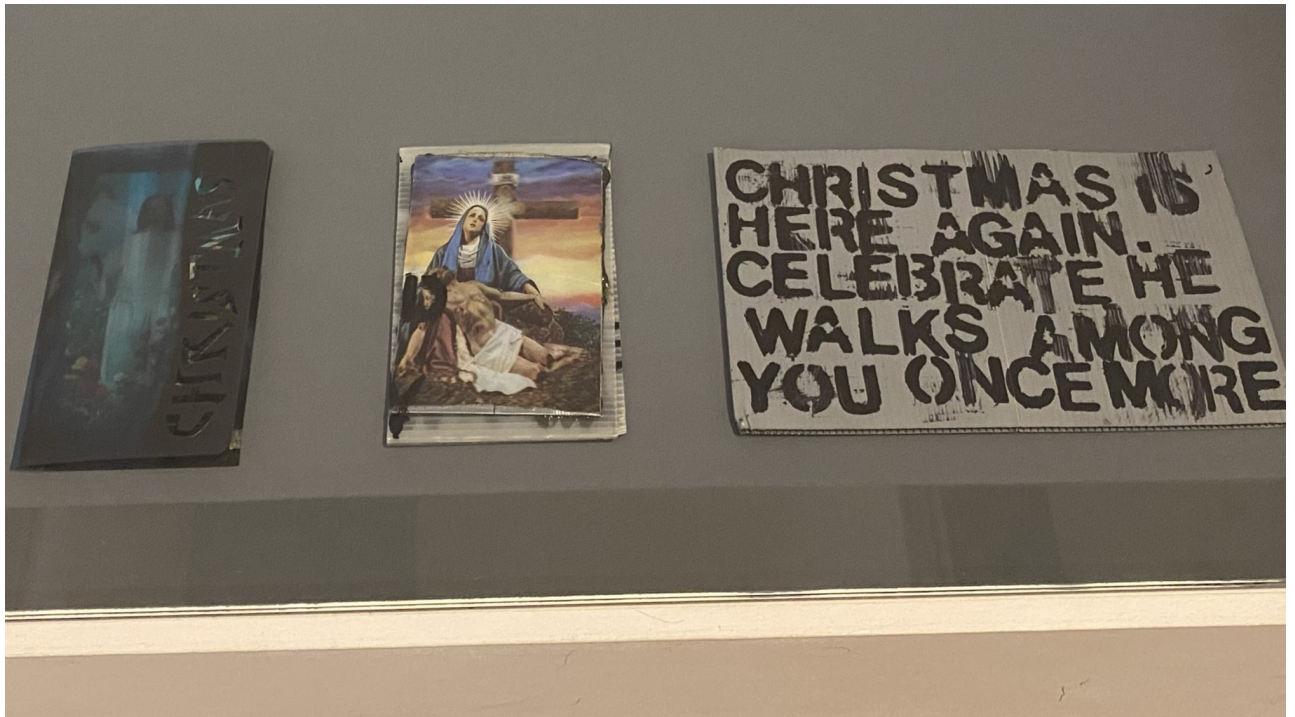


Photographs of *We Speak to Western Lands with Cruel Honesty* (1989, lost work).

X-Rays, oil pastel, photographic prints, lead tape.



Book cover of the novel *Murder at the Lazy Y* with hand drawn grid (1988).



Left to right:

Christmas card. (1987).

X-ray with cut out stencil and lenticular card.

Courtesy of the collection of Diane Symons.

Christmas card (1993).

**Correx card, lenticular card and inscription
by
Donald Rodney.**

Courtesy of the collection of Diane Symons.

Christmas Card (1993).

**Correx card and inscription by Donald
Rodney.**

Courtesy of the collection of Diane Symons.

Images of the artwork in the vitrine in

Gallery 2, (from left to right):



***X-Ray Bird* (1987).**

X-rays, glue, wire (top).

Courtesy of the collection of Diane Symons.



Photos of the installation *Othello* (c. 1996) in the exhibition *Care and Control* at the Hackney Psychiatric Hospital.



Photographs with hand tinted black

background used to produce the slide tape

work *Cataract* (1991).

Photographs: Viv Reiss.



Photographs of milk and coins in a milk bottle (1990).

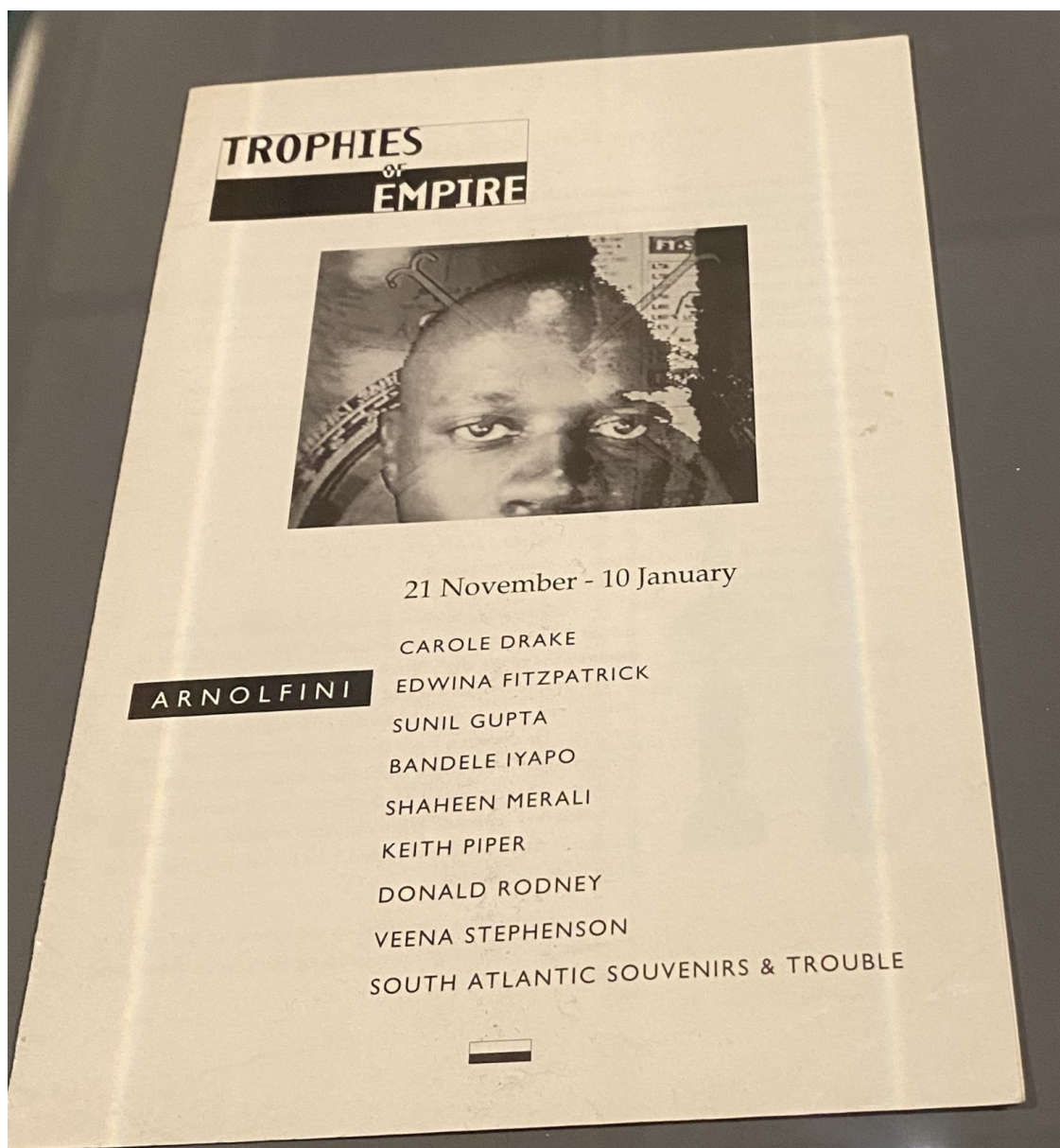




Studio research for *Land of Milk and Honey II* (1997).



Catalogue for the exhibition *Trophies of Empire* (1994).



Pamphlet for the exhibition *Trophies of Empire* (1992) (bottom).



Untitled collage (1994).

An enlarged test strip of a collage, studio research (work not realised).





Untitled collages x 2 (1994).

**The collages have been cut into for reuse
(left
and right).**

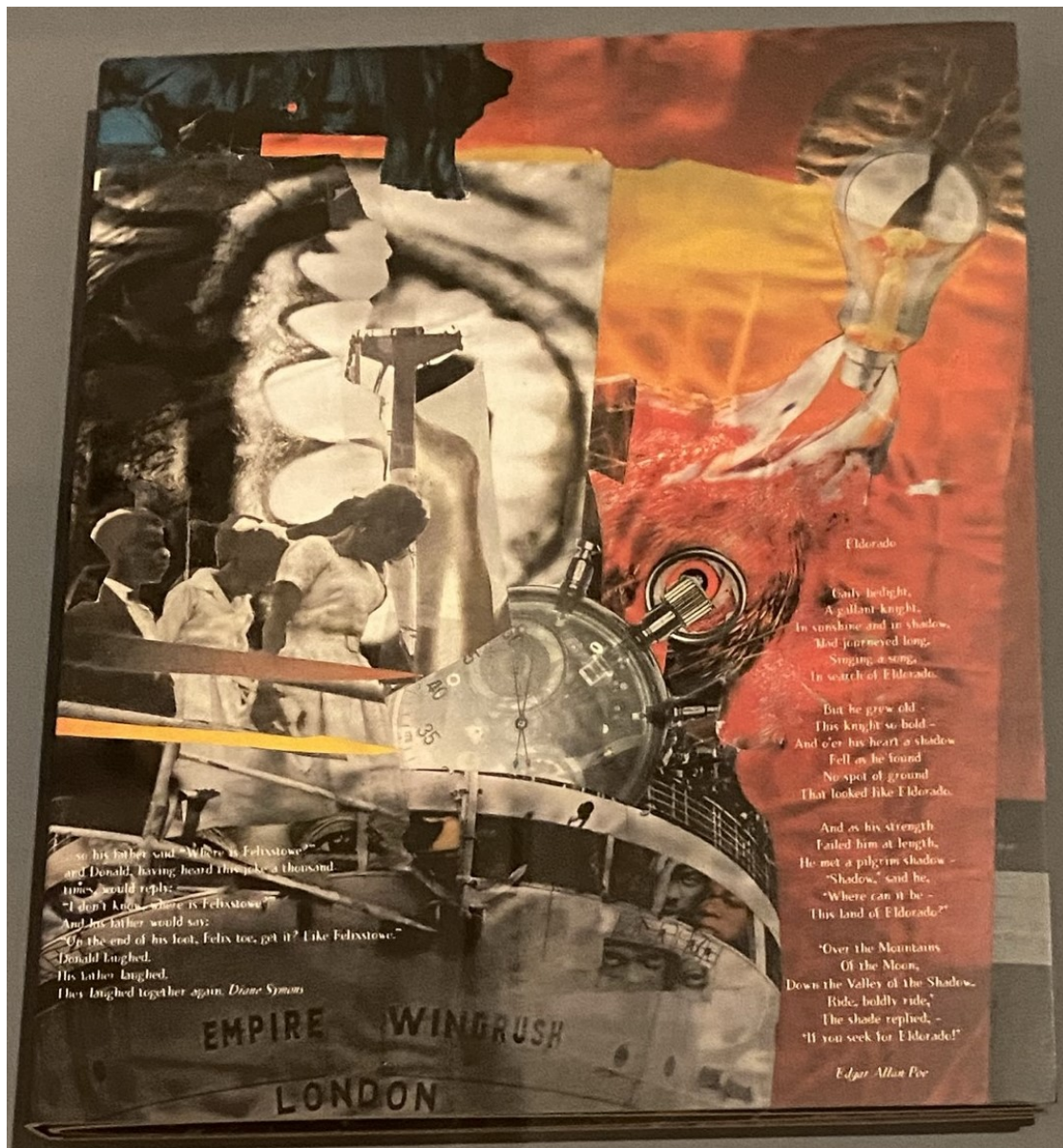


Photograph of Donald at home (1994).

Photograph: Diane Symons.

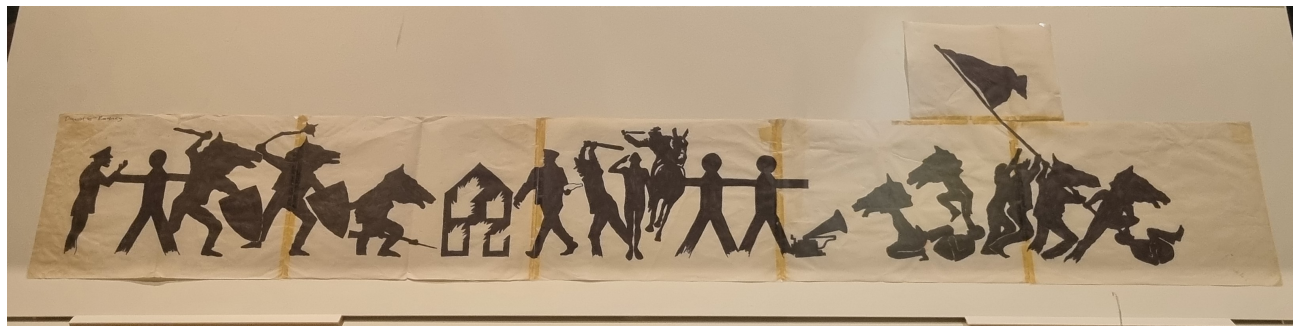


**Untitled photo collage (1994).
Colour photographs and tape.**



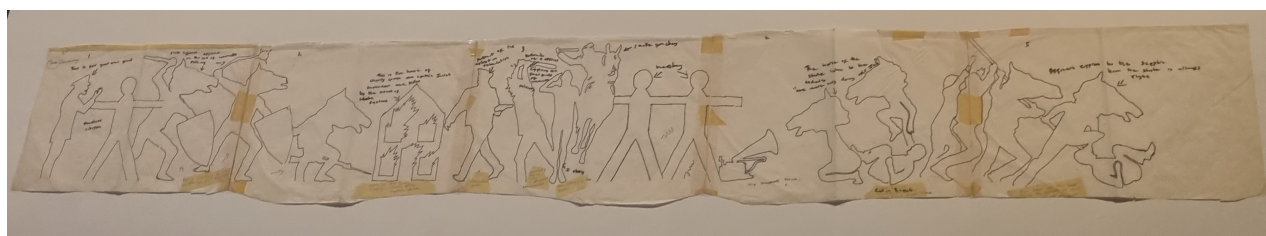
Book produced by Donald Rodney for his
solo
show *9 Night in Eldorado*, South London
Gallery, London (1997).

**Images of the artworks in the vitrine in
Gallery 3, (from left to right):**



***Preparatory Drawings for the work Soweto/
Guernica (1988).***

Signed drawing on paper.



***Preparatory Drawings for the work Soweto/
Guernica (1988).***

Test drawing on paper.

Wolverhampton Art Gallery.



Photograph of *We Speak to Western Lands with Cruel Honesty* (1989, lost work).

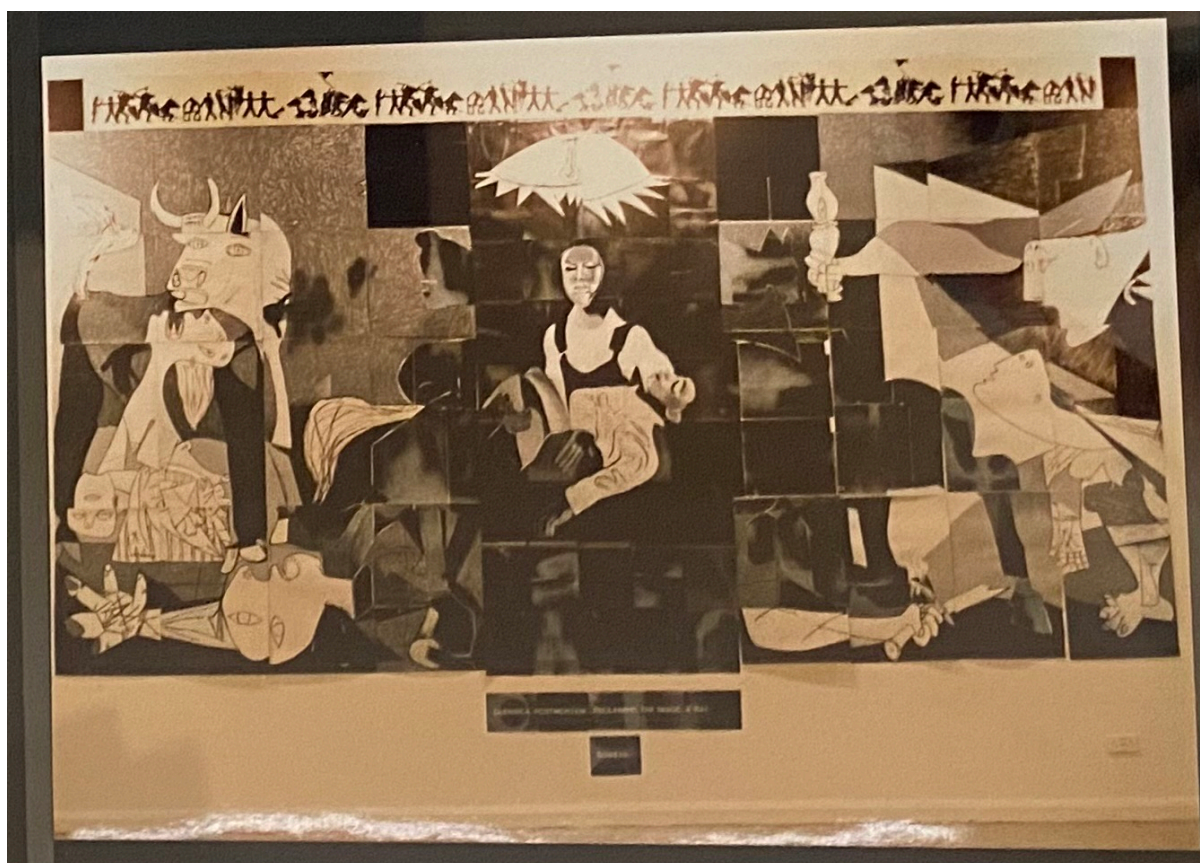
X-Rays, oil pastel, photographic prints, lead tape (top left).



Postcard of Orgreave 18 June 1984.

Photograph: John Harris (top right).

**The image of the police officer on horseback
was used in the work *Soweto/Guernica*
(1988).**



Photograph of *Soweto/Guernica* (1988, lost work).

Oil pastel on x-ray and paper.

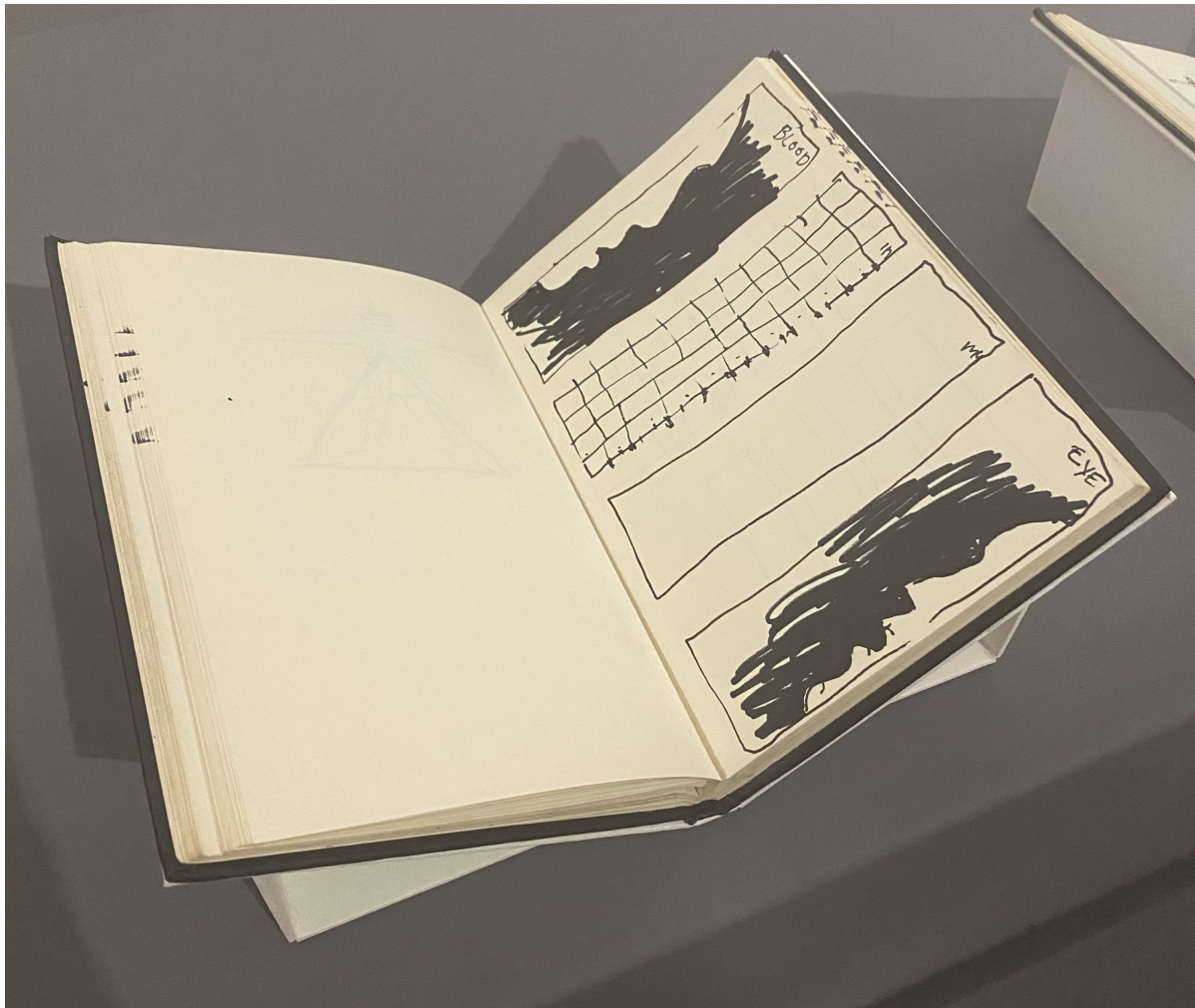


Photograph of *The Watchtower, Citizens Stand in British Standard Time, An X-ray History, Monitor and X-ray Analysis* (1988, partially lost work).

Mixed media installation, x-rays.

Images of the sketchbooks in the vitrine in

Gallery 3, (from left to right):



Sketchbook number 9, pp.70–71 1986

Ink on paper

**This sketch is part of the preliminary work for
*Blood in my Eye.***



Sketchbook number 18, pp.64-65

1987

Ink on paper

Image of a child titled *TEST DRAWING*.



Sketchbook number 23, pp.44-45

1988

Ink on paper

Sketch titled *The Secret life of Fragile houses.*



Sketchbook number 24, pp.78–79 1988

Ink on paper

Magazine cutting attached to page (left).

Page of text (right).

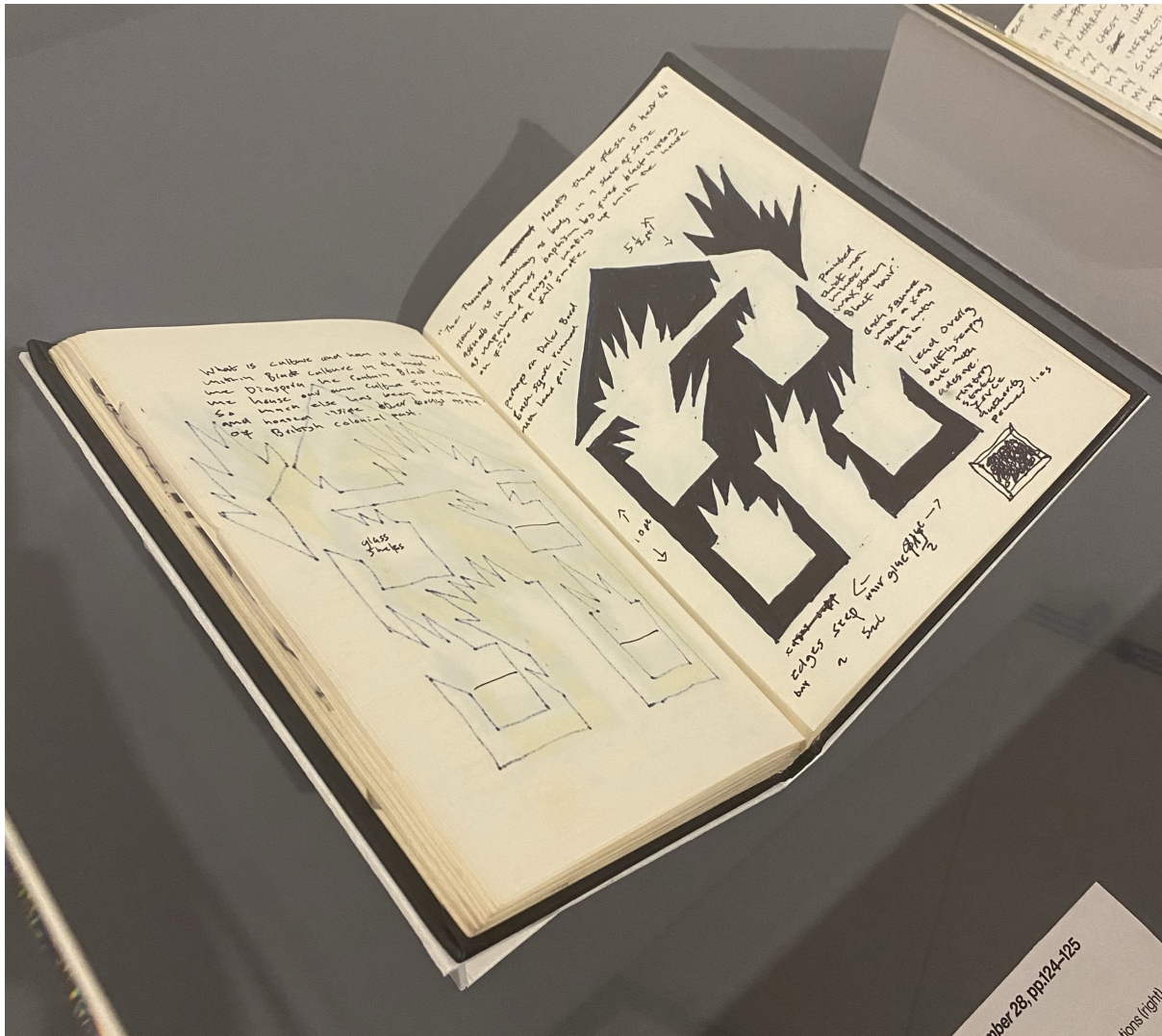


Sketchbook number 26, pp.4–5

1989

Ink on paper

Sketch titled *conceptual patterning black cells under a microscope*, attached to page.

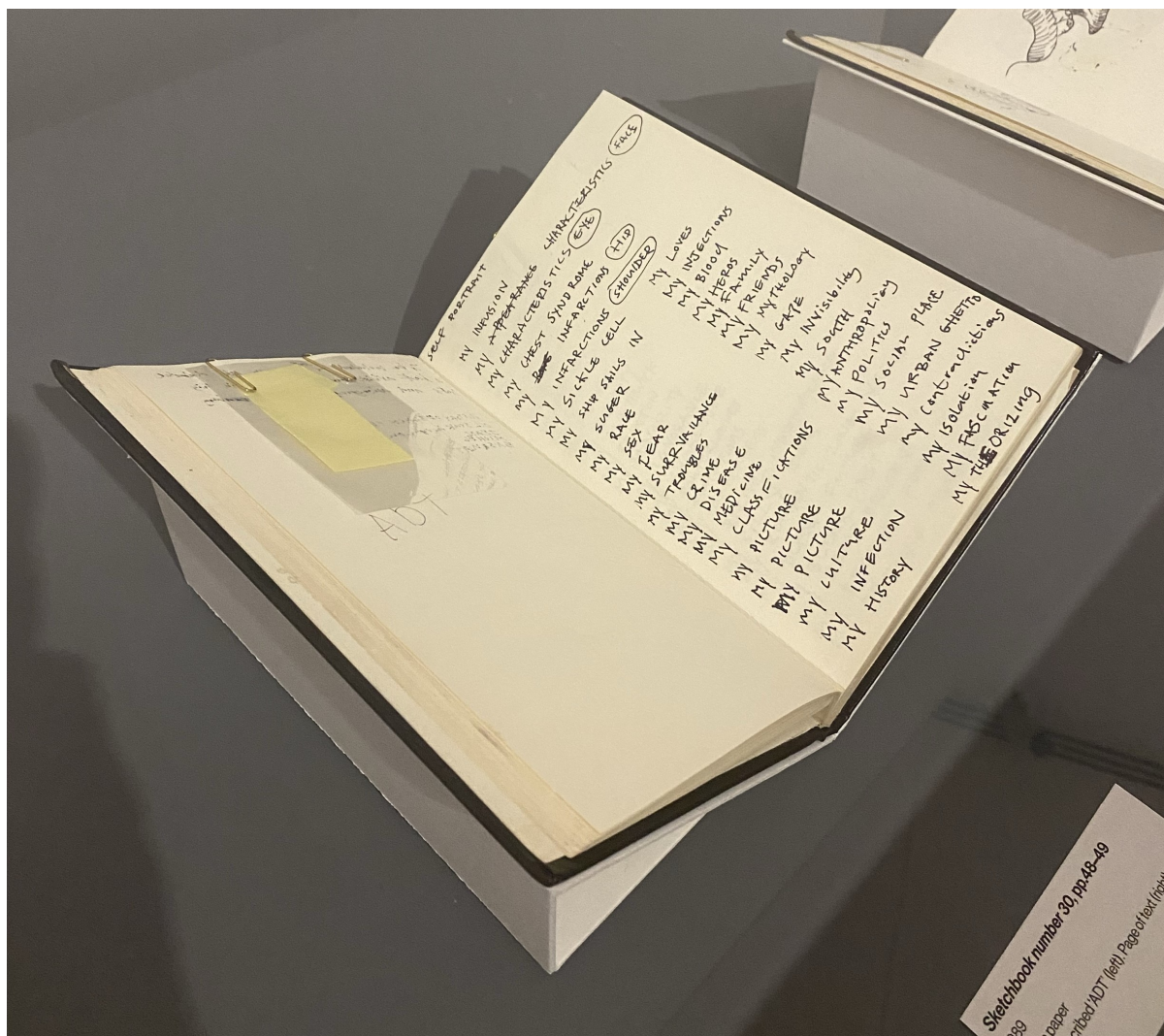


Sketchbook number 28, pp.124–125 1989

Ink on paper

Page of text (left).

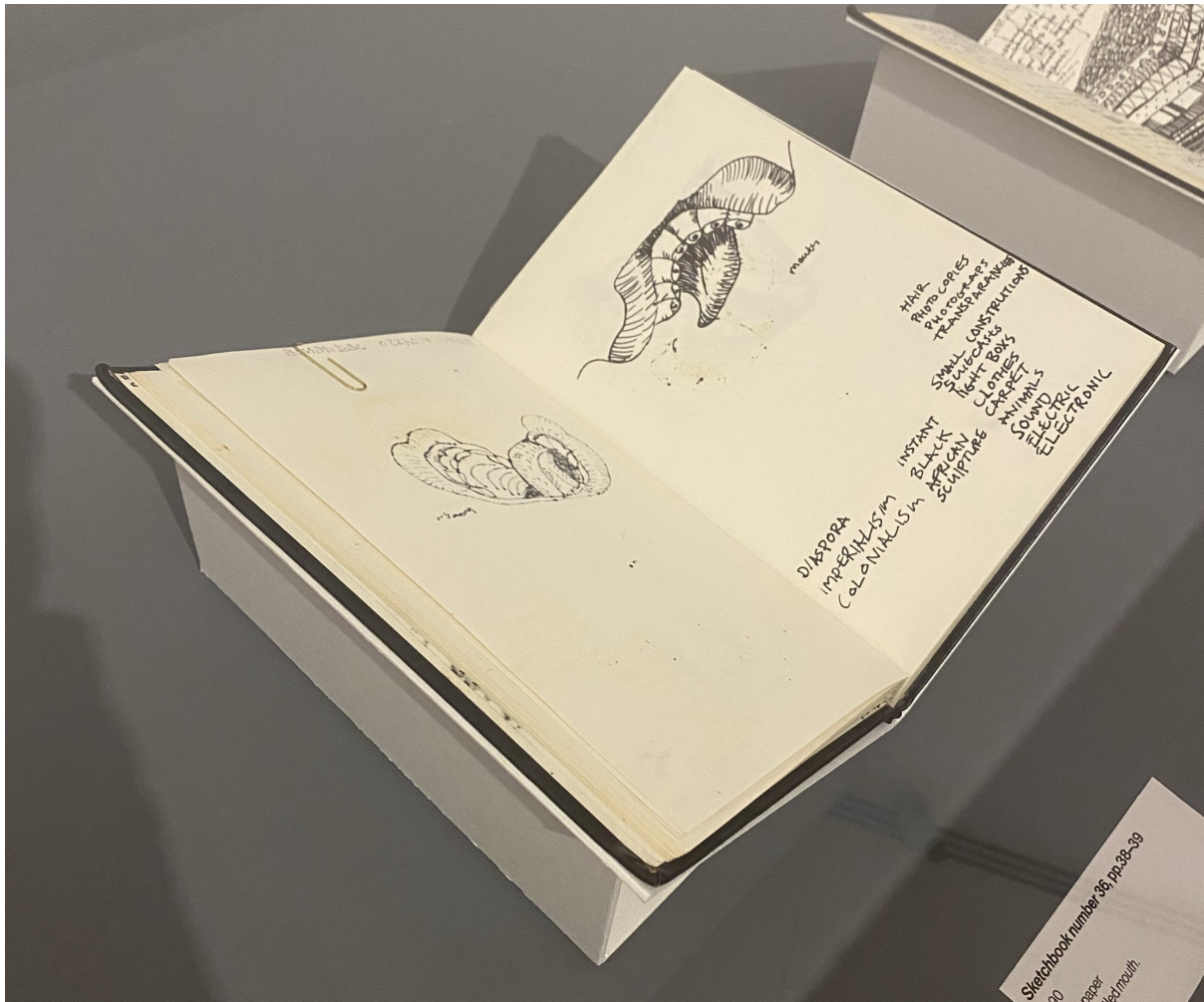
Sketch of a house on fire with annotations (right).



Sketchbook number 30, pp.48-49 1989

Ink on paper

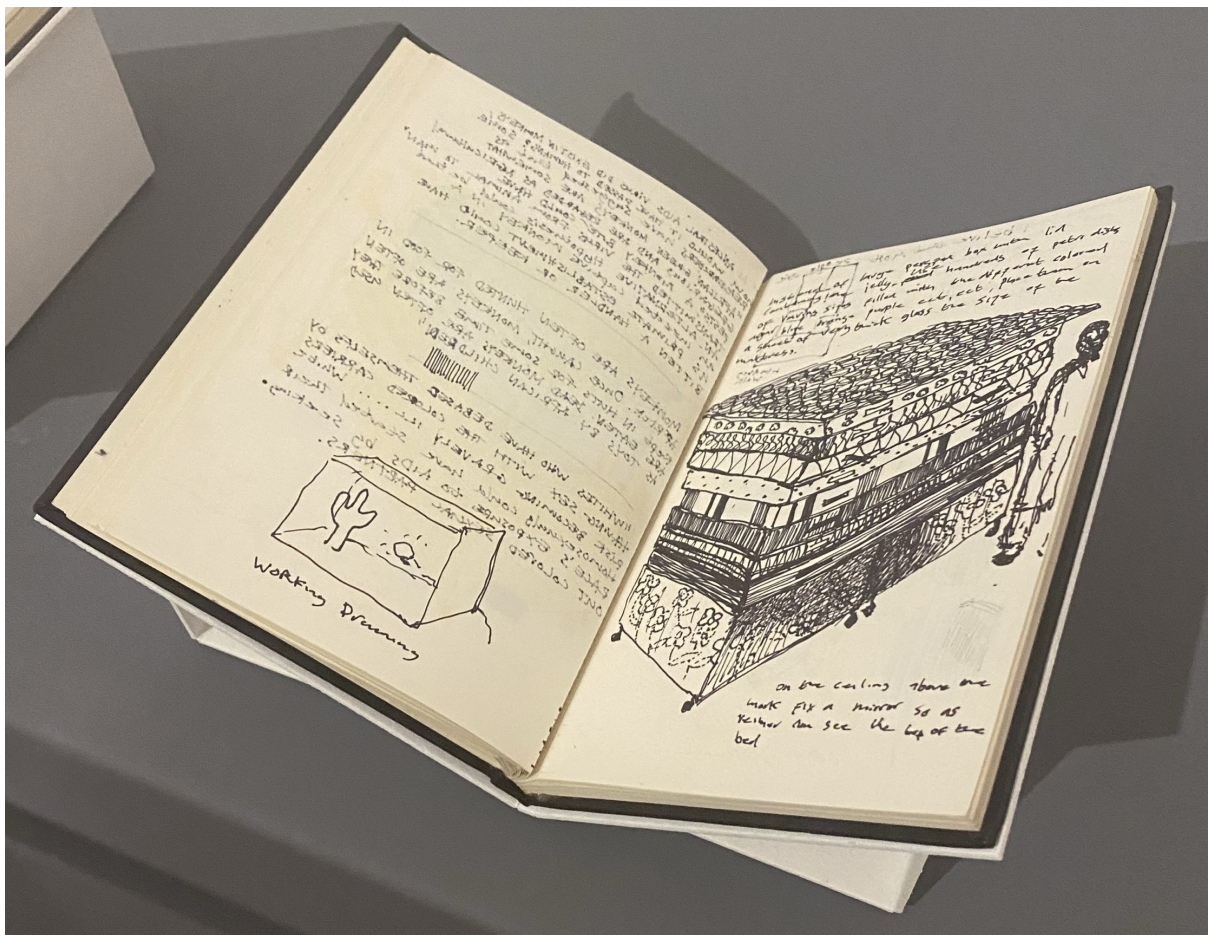
Page inscribed 'ADT' (left). Page of text (right).



Sketchbook number 36, pp.38–39

1990

Ink on paper Sketch titled *mouth*.



Sketchbook number 38, pp.62–63

1992

Ink on paper

Sketch titled *Working Drawing* (left). Sketch with annotations (right).



Sketchbook number 41, pp.38–39 1995

Ink on paper. Sketch of a water splash or a crown.

All sketchbooks courtesy of Tate Archive: The notebooks/sketchbooks were purchased from Diane Symons, on behalf of the Executors of the Estate of Donald Rodney with the remaining archives donated by the Executors, July 2003.