

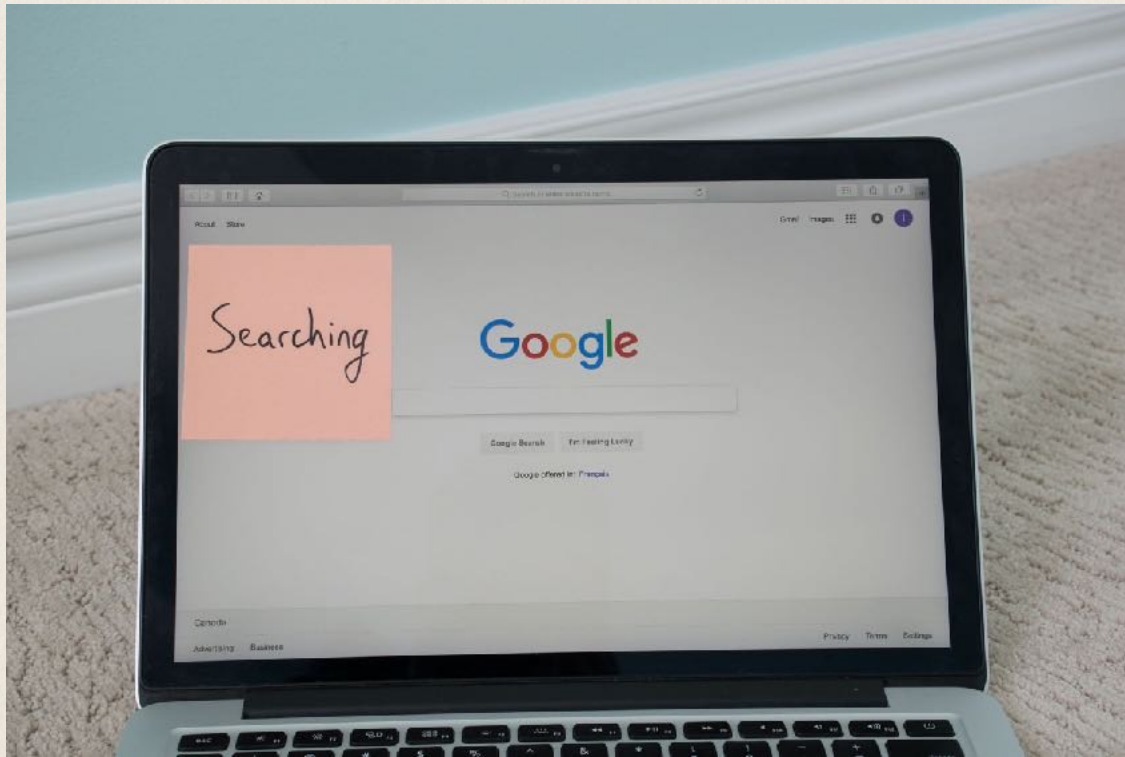
to
build

myself

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

to build myself is an experimental writing and visual art piece created from people's response to the question: what words come to mind when thinking about identity? This piece began by collecting people's responses and writing them down on post-it notes, finally ending up with a varying collection of words. From this collection of words, a series of photos and poems were created, each differing in style and form. *to build myself* was influenced by a collection of works edited and compiled by conceptual writer, Malcom Parr entitled *Found Poems*. *Found Poems* is a compilation of poems all written from found materials such as phone conversations, instruction manuals, artwork titles, and children's games. Both works — *Found Poems* and *to build myself* — push the boundaries of literature, proving that the source material for a poem can come from anywhere — there is literary potential all around. The photo element of this work combines written and visual art, reflecting the malleable nature of art and literature. The subject of each photo connects to the word found within and to the poem accompanying it.

The theme of the work and central driving force is the notion of identity, how it is something every person has yet it can vary so drastically. Each poem relates to the idea of identity and is primarily created using words from people's responses. The poems are meant to speak to the reader, to reach the reader emotionally. A poem that one reader may not find solace in, another may. There are a variety of poetic styles used throughout the work influenced by the works of writers Charles Bernstein and Gertrude Stein. Bernstein experimented with typography and word placement, which is a recurring element of the poems, as well as Stein's manipulation of words — arranging them in such a way that renders the poem almost unreadable. Each style mirrors an aspect of identity; the careful placement of words reflecting the intricate process of building one's own identity, while the unreadable prose reflects the disorienting experience of finding a true identity. Together, these styles reflect the very nature of identity: carefully composed yet easily changed.



i am **searching** for **myself**. have you seen **me**?
i am **searching** for **myself**. have you seen **me**?
i am **searching** for **myself**. have you seen **me**?

i **lost** my **soul**. can you help me find it?

i was last seen in **toronto**
wearing **blue** jeans,
a **grey** smile,
and an **orange** sweater

i am **searching** for **myself**. have you seen **me**?
i **lost** my **soul**. can you help me find it?

this is not **FALSE** this is a **CRISIS!**

i am **searching** for **myself**. have you seen **me**? i **lost** my
soul. can you help me find it?

i only have **one**.

please
please
please

i am not **aware** of my **surroundings**
i am **lost, scattered** across somewhere **bigger than me**
i am **searching** for the rest of **me**. have you seen my body?

i was last seen in **toronto**
wearing **blue** jeans,
a **grey** smile,
and an **orange** sweater

confusion, confusion, confusion
i am **lost, involved** in the **race of life**.

i am **searching** for the rest of **me**. have you seen my body?



here i stand
staring at my **tired reflection**
wishing i had some **bread**

i ask myself: **who am i?**
i ask myself: **who am i?**

my **soul** is **personal** and **private**
it doesn't like to answer the question

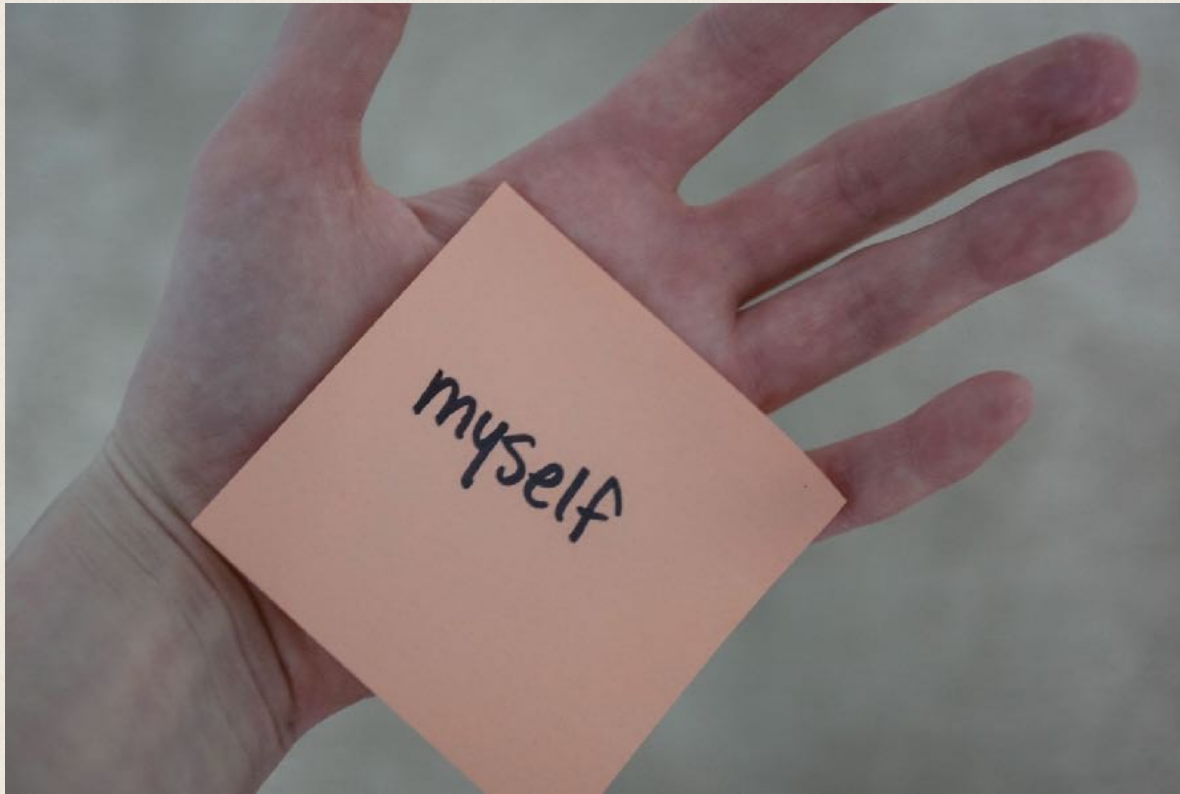
so i ask again,
who am i?
who am i?

tell me something **real**
i want nothing **false**

who am i?
still no answer.

i wish i had some **bread**





who you were is not **who you will become**
who you were is not **who you will become**

myself is **vulnerable**
myself is **private**

who you are is not **who you were**
who you are is not **who you were**

i am **growing**
i am **real**
i am **human**

the **past** is **history**
i am not **who i was**

i am **who** i am

i am **changing**
i am **myself**



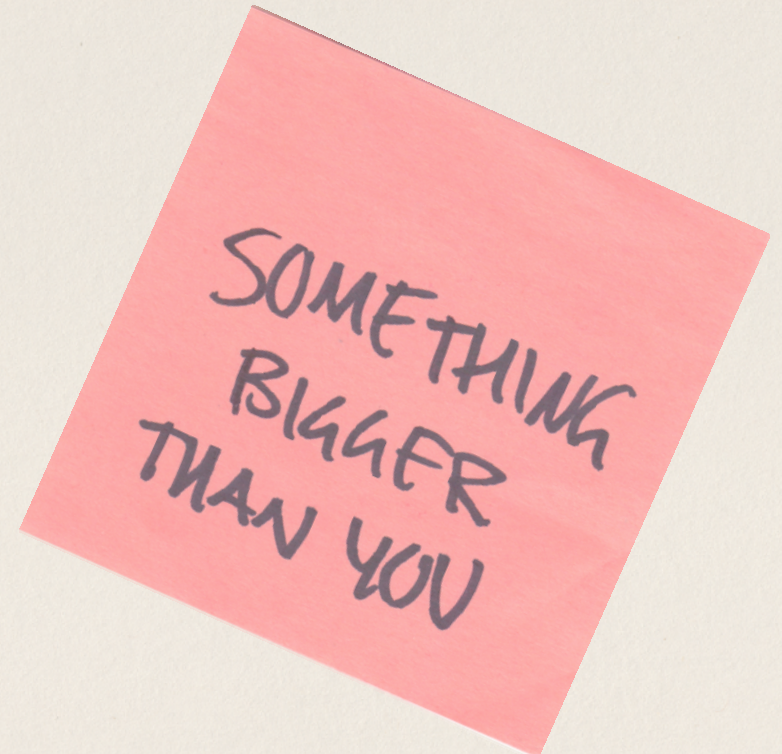
OTHERNESS

**soaring potential, a privilege
constant otherness, a burden**

OTHERNESS



to build something bigger than you,
shape who you will become.
end who you were,
grow! grow! grow!
end who you were,
grow!
the self is ever evolving —
constantly changing.
be who you are,
in name & spirit.
one of a kind soul,
unique character,
fragile morals.
nurturing the self —
to grow.





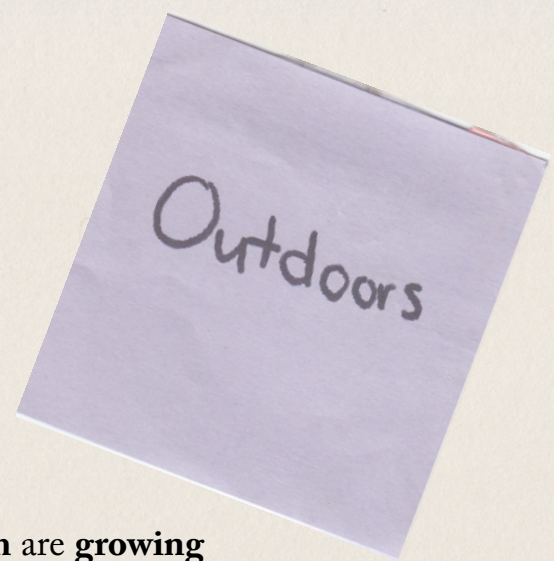
the **outdoors** are **grey**
my **soul** is **blue**

the **orange florals** in **my bedroom** are **growing**
i like to watch them **grow**
though **nurturing** them is **a burden**

i am **tired**
i am not **growing** like the **florals** in **my bedroom**

i want to be like them
in a **natural growing state**

instead
i will sit here in **my bedroom**
with my **blue soul**
and wait for **time** to **end**





a **musical** soul

humming tunes of **history** and **loss**

plucking the strings of **time**

hoping the day will soon **end**

i sit and sing,

i am **soaring**

i am **soaring** across the **vast blue** sky

i **race** with the birds because **humanity** fails **me**

i am **soaring** and i am **searching**

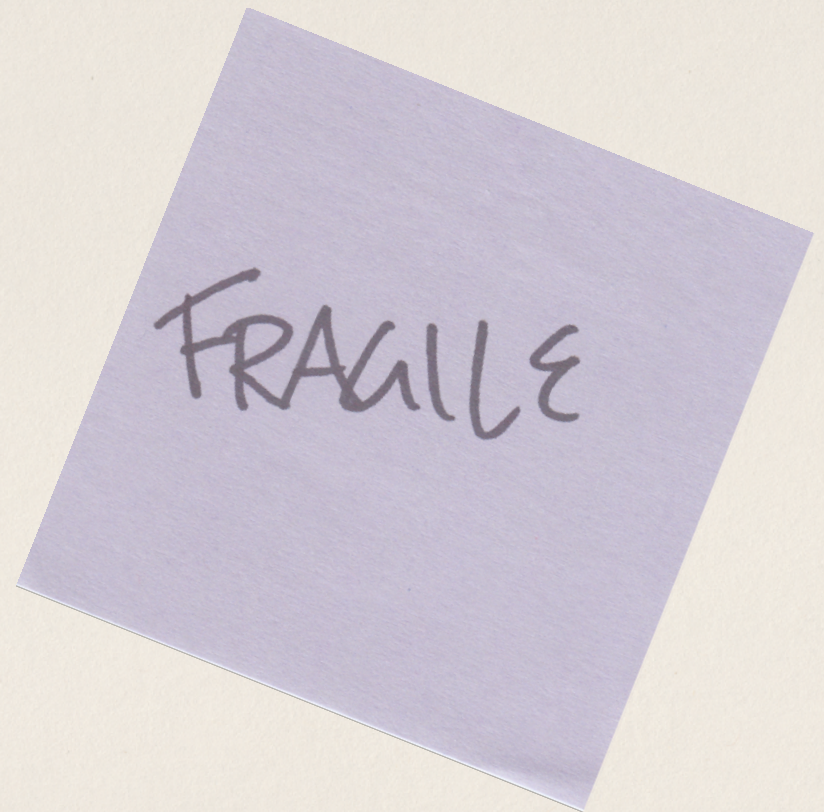
searching for a **complicated future**

musical



the **self** is **fragile**.
vulnerable,
precious,
complicated

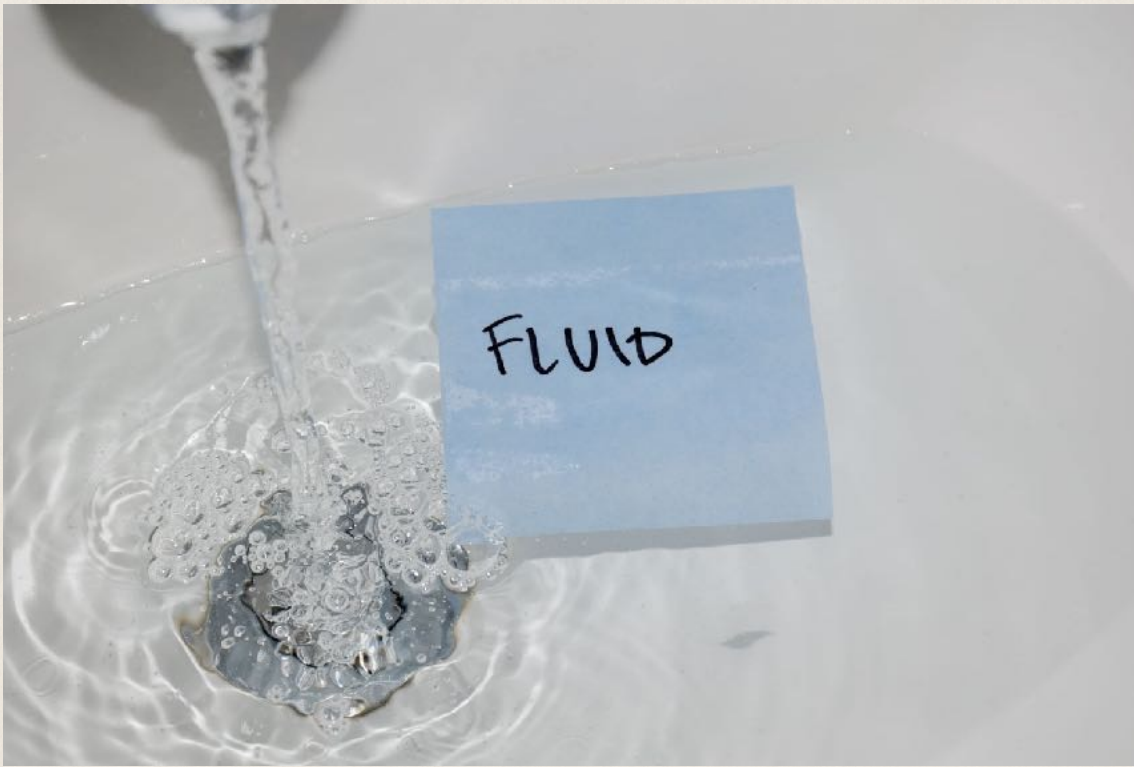
like fine china,
it is easily **sh/a t / t / e r / e d /**





time is never ending but life has an end
time is never ending but life has an end
time time time time time
is never ending
 ending
 ending
 ending time
but life has an end life has an end life
life end and ending time
time is never ending but life has an end.
time is never ending time is never ending
time is never ending
time is precious and never ending never
ending precious time
precious time is never ending
but life has an end.
precious life has an end
precious life
end life and never ending time
end life and never ending time
end ending
end ending
end
 ending.





fluid
liquid

(taken from dictionary definitions)

having particles that easily move
capable of f

l

o

w

i

n

g

through fine openings
forces the **fluid**

boundaries became **fluid**
smooth easy style
the fluid movements
available for various uses

fluid

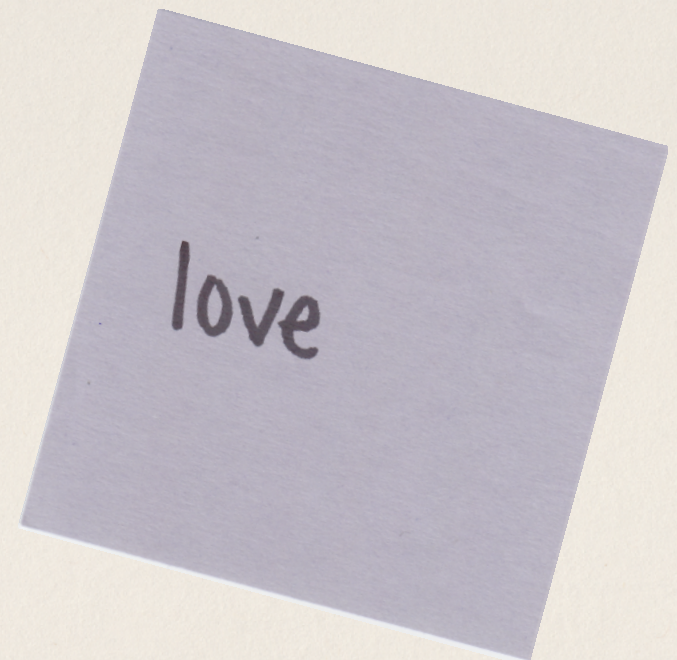


LOVE me,
precious woman.

me, an immigrant's son,
LOVE me.

soul & spirit within,
vulnerable.

our **LOVE**,
a complicated love
growing
& changing.



END