

I Still Dream of Lost Vocabularies

Exhibition at Autograph, London

10 October 2025 – 21 March 2026

Curated by Bindi Vora

Artists: Arpita Akhanda, Brook Andrew,
Jess Atieno, Wendimagegn Belete, Sim Chi Yin,
Sunil Gupta, Kudzanai-Violet Hwami, Reena Saini Kallat,
Henna Nadeem, Sheida Soleimani, Sabrina Tirvengadum,
Thato Toebe, and Qualeasha Wood

This autumn, Autograph presents a new major group exhibition examining political dissent and erasure through the idea of collage, from cut paper to generative AI.

This exhibition examines how photographs can be deconstructed and reassembled through the idea of collage, offering new perspectives on complex histories and contested social realities.

With deep roots in activism and artistic experimentation, photomontage has a rich legacy as a powerful tool for artists engaging with experiences of political dissent and erasure. Its possibilities are amplified by the relentless evolution of photography – a medium shaped by technological advancement and the shifting politics of representation.

From cut paper to generative AI, more than 90 works by 13 contemporary artists use collage as both method and metaphor, highlighting the fragility of photographic ‘truth’ and the archives that hold it.

The exhibition debuts a number of works never shown before, including a new co-commission from **Thato Toebe**, developed with Autograph and the V&A Parasol Foundation Women in Photography curatorial project, in response to the Royal Photographic Society collection at the V&A. Autograph has also commissioned **Henna Nadeem** to create a new collage reflecting on her earlier practice, and the exhibition also features new works by **Sabrina Tirvengadum**, developed through her 2025 Autograph x Light Work residency.

I Still Dream of Lost Vocabularies spans both galleries at Autograph’s iconic building in Shoreditch. In Gallery 1, themes emerge of visualising lost histories, interrogating digital culture and exploring how personal and collective identities are shaped:

Sabrina Tirvengadum uses an AI model she trained on family photographs to reconstruct a fractured history shaped by the legacy of indentured labour in Mauritius; **Sunil Gupta**’s digital collages from the 1990s navigate the intersections of queer identity and diasporic experience; and **Qualeasha Wood** transforms self-portraits into tapestries that reflect on bodily autonomy and the pressures of internet culture. **Jess Atieno** troubles colonial archives in East Africa to explore how histories can be restitched into counter-narratives; **Sim Chi Yin** reflects on transgenerational memory by intervening with an archive of magic lantern slides from the early 1900s as precarious sites of photographic time travel. **Thato Toebe** interrogates the visibility and erasure of black bodies using archival and contemporary images in Southern Africa; **Henna Nadeem** creates intricately cut collages that challenge the illusion of landscape as a neutral space; while **Sheida Soleimani** constructs layered tableaux that link political exile from Iran with the care of injured migratory birds.

The works in Gallery 2 highlight the fragility of photographic records, the politics of borders and belonging, and the decolonisation of archival narratives:

Kudzanai-Violet Hwami's painting grapples with the politics of representation, foregrounding identity as a site of reinvention and possibility; **Arpita Akhanda's** hand-woven maps and photographs respond to the traumatic legacy of the Partition of India in 1947. **Reena Saini Kallat's** work reveals how passports, privilege and policy divide the world into unequal zones of access and exclusion; **Brook Andrew** critically engages with the ways Western narratives have stereotyped and marginalised Indigenous Australian voices; and **Wendimagegn Belete** uses fragments of archival film to reveal the faces of Ethiopian fighters who resisted fascism and colonisation from 1935-1941.

As we reflect on the future of image-making, *I Still Dream of Lost Vocabularies* resists completeness, questioning whether constructed images can stand in for disputed – and often entangled – narratives when words fail.

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Notes to Editors

Media contact

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Press images and interviews are available.

Address and ticketing

Autograph, Rivington Place, London EC2A 3BA

Entry is free. Visitors can book timed tickets [on Autograph's website](#) or visit anytime the exhibition is open.

Links and tags

[Exhibition webpage](#)

[Visiting information](#)

@autographabp on Instagram and TikTok

Accessions into Autograph's Collection of Photography

Thato Toebe was commissioned by Autograph and the V&A Parasol Foundation Women in Photography curatorial project, to create two new works responding to the Royal Photographic Society collection at the V&A. Two new works were created, and one will be accessioned into Autograph's [collection of photography](#) and be displayed in the exhibition.

Henna Nadeem was commissioned by Autograph to create new works to be displayed in the exhibition. The commission will also enter Autograph's collection of photography.

Sabrina Tirvengadam was selected as the 2025 [Autograph / Light Work artist residency](#). Each year, Autograph selects an artist to go on a residency at Light Work's studios to pursue their personal projects. The programme is a partnership between Autograph and Light Work in Syracuse, New York, and has been in existence since 1996. Her new works will be displayed for the first time in the exhibition and will also enter Autograph's collection of photography.

About Autograph

Established in 1988, Autograph's mission is to champion the work of artists who use photography and film to highlight questions of race, representation, human rights and social justice. Through doing so, we invite people to explore the creative and critical power of visual representation, in shaping our understanding of ourselves and of others. autograph.org.uk

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