

# *Vita Contemplativa*: Interviews on the Objects of our Home

By Willem Deisinger

"In his text, the writer sets up house. Just as he trundles papers, books, pencils, documents untidily from room to room, he creates the same disorder in his thoughts. They become pieces of furniture that he sinks into, content or irritable. He strokes them affectionately, wears them out, mixes them up, re-arranges, ruins them. For a man who no longer has a homeland, writing becomes a place to live."

Adorno, "*Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life*," 53.

In our contemporary age of labour, the home begins to lose its function as a space for "gossip to generate the warm atmosphere conducive to growth," writes Adorno. The gathering of friends, soft mornings and late nights, once a space for deep engagement, has now been co-opted by a force of critique optimized for labour and evaluation. Writing a manifesto to reconsider the good life or eudaimonia in the face of alienation from our own labour, our communities, politics and ourselves in the 20th/21st century, *Minima Moralia* is Adorno's personal attempt at reconciling the immediate post-war abandonment of a home, Germany, that he had escaped as a Jew to live in California during World War 2. Left alone through a forced severing from his home, he takes up a new one in his writing: collecting, storing and rummaging through his ideas to find whatever semblance of home he can. Yet, this pursuit of clarity through being critical and scrutinizing his work, which first came to be from the warm conversations and gossip of his home, becomes alienated from himself as he is removed from his writing through the edits. The home he found through writing—replacing chairs, picture frames, and boxes of old mementos with his books, ideas, paragraphs, documents and essays—had slowly become a space for producing intellectual thought which forces scrutiny, stripping away his immediate reflections, ideals and contradictions that made up who he was.

"In [his new home] he inevitably produces, as his family once did, refuse and lumber. But now he lacks a store-room, and it is hard in any case to part from left-overs. So he pushes them along in front of him, in danger finally of filling his pages with them."

Adorno, "*Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life*," 53.

A text that I've read countless times, *Memento*, the essay quoted above from *Minima Moralia*, begins as a declaration of how to write dialectically, to work a text into a tight play of words to express thinking on paper, as opposed to a didactic mode of thought and a telling someone "this is that" from a position of power. He attempts to have an anti-oppressive way of writing, offering a hand to the reader as he hopes they can enjoy the play with him. Feeling the unstateable heaviness of his personal context, the history of his life and his abandonment to a world without a home, without a family, he desperately

finishes the text: "In the end, the writer is not even allowed to live in his writing."<sup>1</sup> *Minima Moralia* was a project for Adorno to reflect and let us learn how to live a good life after the horrors of WW2. However, through this process of writing, with the editing, adjusting and labour of a final product, he had removed himself, his reflection, tracing and wonders you might attempt to record after dinner with friends, from the home he had created when he had nothing left. And, without a home to go back to, he continues to write.

It's through this process of giving oneself to the home that can make it so difficult when things don't work out. There's a vulnerability that comes with the attempt of home-making, and we can only hope that the objects we share and the people we live with will return a vulnerability and acceptance that makes a place welcoming and nurturing. All throughout the day we give ourselves to other things and people that come with a belief, whether it's small or large, that these things we do welcome us in the world. We make small homes throughout our day, medium sized ones percolate over time, and bigger ones come to fruition: a constant gardening of relationships, spaces and objects that come and go.

The past year, as I've tended to the homes in my life, I've tried to play with what a digital home might consist of. With the likes of others who have found the available ways of being online to be more and more predatory of the user, acts of resistance have become a practice of daily life. I've been working through what I can claim as a difficult balance of alternative-phone set ups: a few different older smartphones that I have set up for specific purposes as a way to regain a digital agency, and potentially reclaiming a digital home. It's a participation outside of the attention economy without trying to fully deny Smartphone culture (as much as I'm currently wanting to). I've found that the breaking up of apps into groups creates an interesting opportunity for attention, like how a list in certain literary circles offers a stark and abrupt way of comparing each part with itself. However, breaking these groups up into separate physical devices offers an opportunity to exist amongst these economies built today, while combating authoritative platforms and their attention traps. Like setting up different character builds in an RPG, when I leave the home with my Samsung S4 Mini, a 4inch screen built with essentials, and no browser or Playstore, it's a much different feeling than leaving with my Samsung A40 that's 5.5" across with Discord, Substack and other post Web 2.0 platforms. A digital object tethered to a vast ecosystem of databases, containers, fiber optics and complex linear algebra are much more subdued when you have no Playstore to redownload them, or a browser to use the web app.

However, I've begun to feel out of home within my digital worlds, and certain communities and friends because of it. Before, when having one Smartphone, there was a seamlessness to engaging with apps, even if I was giving up some kind of agency, capacity or awareness when flowing from app to app and news feed to news feed. There was a cultural home that I engaged with: some kind of digital agora that we all resided in, no matter how pre-packaged, siloed and fed these spaces are. There are days where being out in the world with only a few apps, restricted to what I could do online, gave me a real sense of who I was. There was a definitive answer to things, a strong concept that was clear as opposed to an array of feelings and possibilities. Sometimes, the friction becomes too much, apps breaking down from software updates or not having access to certain functions when I need it: being critical and developing friction in a world can be exhausting.

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<sup>1</sup> Adorno, "*Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life*," 53.

It was through these interviews that I began to feel a bit more hopeful with the time and tending that it takes to partake in a home. Living with your objects and making a home shouldn't be one through activation or critique, it should be a living through the objects that brings a grounded relationality out to greet you. The existence of yourself is only edited out through the process of labour vis-a-vis capital, Adorno's point in *Memento*, however, rebelling against this perhaps should start in the home where labouring and work can be separated. My phones became a grandiose project that needed to be active and engaged with a certain idealistic vision of what mobile phone culture could be. It's an experiment. It was only through coming back to a goalless contemplation around how I live was I able to reconnect with how these phones really brought me closer to a digital and physical home that I wanted.

The people I interviewed reflected this, and Adorno would see this microcosm as a kind of resistance. One that's resistive to labour extracting activities which try to infiltrate the home through smart devices and other extractive industries that are incredibly ubiquitous. We label these moments at home where we aren't working as "leisure time." A definition created as an opposition to hours spent on-the-clock and compensated for. Byung Chul-Han in *Vita Contemplativa* explains that leisure time is "a functional element of production" and a time that we "kill so as not to get bored."<sup>2</sup> He explains that this type of time outside of work and its inactivity, i.e. its definition of not to produce anything, represents an "intense and radiant form of life." It's not as simple as having "free time" but what to do with it: for Han, this time is for active contemplation where we can explore time outside of goals, intentionless and an openness that provokes genuine expression and connection. It's through this lingering and puttering, best done in a setting of the "home," that we can explore some kind of freedom outside of a performance-based logic.

The interviewees and their relationship to certain objects and their home exposed elements of this goalless and receptive lingering: a dance with light, exposure of volume, mysterious corners and panels of thought. If we are to wonder what exists in the home if it's not a place of labour, let's first begin with the mode of directionless meandering that is a friendly conversation:

## Atticus Gordon

**Atticus Gordon is an artist, painter, thinker; and sometime writer, curator and teacher. He is currently based in Ottawa Canada, and holds an MFA in painting from The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (2024). He has exhibited around the world, in cities such as Berlin, Beijing, Hong Kong, Montreal, London, and Chicago.**

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WILLEM: "The work and writing I do is around personal computing and how we live with technology. A question I explore is: what are the contemporary experiences, frictions and politics around the day to day experiences of technology today? Over the past year I've used multiple different older androids as ways to play with the physical framing of how I might live with devices and the experiences that come with them. I find that the Smartphone has flattened the experience and homogenised what we might do through them. Using different phones with different purposes has brought up new intentional ways

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<sup>2</sup> Han, "*Vita Contemplativa*," 27.

of being online and connecting to the world through technology, and a new way of creating a home for myself. It's both spread out my social awareness of what my home could be, and also made me reflect on how our homes online and offline have become a false dichotomy.

What's interesting for us with these interviews is to find certain objects, be it electronic devices, furniture, tools, food, etc. that might offer a particular perspective on how you might make a home, live in it, understand it, not understand it or see its threads begin to appear. It could be a meditation on how certain objects might change the way you interact in the world, outside or inside your home. Or how that object(s) might help you understand what your home is, or what a home might be for you."

ATTICUS: "The first thing that comes to mind are books. Collecting them, browsing them, they have always moved alongside me from apartment to apartment. Having just moved back to Canada, and being in the process of building a new home, I was happy to retrieve and unite with my collections of books that had been stored and spread across various places: my apartment in Chicago, my painting studio in Chicago, my parents place in Ottawa, and my girlfriends old apartment in Ottawa. When I have a book I take it seriously, I try to read everything I have, there is a sense of importance, a physicality connected with knowledge. Digital books, journals are so utterly different, there is no weight to them, they are forgettable. I remember hearing that everything done on a screen is less memorable since it involves only sight and minimal touch, not a full sensory experience. Though similar on the surface, a book takes time, you need to feel every page, you need the right conditions to use it, there is a certain devotion required.

I feel that books as objects have mystery. Books bring me peace in living with them, comfort. Reading is a part of home, shared with people who you can sit with in silence. Books are intimate, you hold them, sit privately and quietly with them, they transport you. You give them and receive them, they offer you ideas, they expand you. The domestic setting is the place for this regenerative communion.

I also think about the art that I collect in the same way. I collect, trade, and buy art from friends, colleagues, artists I meet along the way, some pieces have been passed down through my family, including my grandmother's paintings, drawings, sketchbooks, and art that she collected. I look at the art I own constantly, deeply and in passing. I don't look at it in the same way I view art in museums, galleries or other places. In the home it is truly neutral and almost magical, like I'm in awe of this thing that never seems to stop giving, it has no fixed meaning, looking over time you notice or emphasize different parts of it. I don't judge form content or merit, I only feel its unique character, like this is a thing in the world that cannot be other than it is. This neutral view of pure acceptance; the flower is a flower, the painting is a painting, neutrality with curiosity and belief, love even. But of course I've judged the piece by taking it into the fold of the home ;)

Thinking of how art in the home washes over life lived in the home around it: art replaces emptiness with character. I'm not talking about something chosen for its aesthetic design in a room, this can be sterile, I'm talking about pieces you choose that become friends as you get to know them, they contribute to the warmth of life, they absorb your attention in moments of strife; I have memories of fixing my vision in some detail on some visual object as everything feels like it's crumbling. I don't know what this is but it is really important to me to live with art, it makes life worth living in a way.

WILLEM: "Your home sounds like a wonderful library of communion and care! A personal agora lol. Honestly, I wish I had the same relationships with books as you do. More recently they've felt like tools, a means towards an end, as opposed to something of an object in themselves to give yourself to and be moved by them. What might be an experience being away from books or certain artwork that made you feel like the way you lived in your space missed them or lacked? And, maybe in an opposite way, was there ever a time that you were happy to be away from books or artwork?"

ATTICUS: It's interesting, over the last years before my recent settling, all of my things; books, artworks, and personal items, were spread between many places of storage, and there is a kind of yearning there, a remembering I have this thing which I need, not in a pragmatic way but as a form of peace or pleasure, remembered as an absence.

Living a more stripped down life was freeing actually, I did enjoy it as a practice and for a few years. There is an openness there, itinerant possibilities. But it grew to feel not totally whole, kind of depersonalized like parts of me become embedded in these objects which become embedded in my life, they live with and alongside me, they offer to expand you. I had this feeling that my apartment in Chicago could almost be anyone's. It's a conflicting experience.

WILLEM: Here's a quote from *Philosophy of the Home* by Emanuele Coccia that highlights a tug and pull about the objects in our home that made me reflect on this back and forth and constant making / remaking of the home. It breaks a bit of this first glance idea of the home being such a universally sturdy or exact place to return to. However, maybe in your position you're having a bit of a "homecoming," returning back to Ottawa that is such a sturdy place to rest.

"The things that occupy our apartments are not extensions of our anatomy; they are magnets, attractors, sirens that bend and seduce the reality of domestic space with irresistible melodies and transform it into a field of constantly unstable forces, a network of sensitive influences that free us only once we have closed the front door behind us. That is why we feel tired on those days when we go outside less than usual. Staying at home means having to resist all the forces that these objects exert on each other, and on us. Life at home is resistance - in an electric, not a mechanical sense. We are a tungsten filament crossed by the force of objects. We light up or switch off thanks to them."

ATTICUS: I'm very interested in your description of the home as something sturdy. I don't think that it always is, oftentimes can be much more brittle and porous than one hopes for. But I do think that the home swells and reflects us, we become embedded in the things we collect, arrange, and choose to spend time with, a process always in flux.

The Emanuele Coccia quote is fascinating. I have been thinking that the process of collection as an extension, not of anatomy, but of expanded potentials: the painting offers to change your life (if you let it) the river rock gifted you by a niece a token of something elementarily human. It is these electric powers which Coccia describes as "sirens" that living with them is an act of "electrical" "resistance" to their forces.

I place the collector in the seat of agency more so. These collections are part of the web of our lives, their energy potential part of the matrix of the home and the lived experiences of physical and emotional life which surrounds them. It's a delicate balance of what you let in, and how it fits with

everything already in the home. I don't think of collecting as additive, but as a mysterious event that happens when the right thing at the right moment is in your path, say an artwork gifted from a friend which is just the exact right thing, there's no logic to it really, but it has the right feeling to its objectness, it quenches a thirst, perhaps one you didn't even know you needed.

WILLEM: What you wrote earlier about art becoming like friends creates a strong image for me:

*"Art replaces emptiness with character. I'm not talking about something chosen for its aesthetic design in a room, this can be sterile, I'm talking about pieces you choose that become friends as you get to know them, they contribute to the warmth of life, they absorb your attention in moments of strife; I have memories of fixing my vision in some detail on some visual object as everything feels like it's crumbling."*

I could really feel what an artwork could do for you in so many ways. I think I'm slightly going to push on how these paintings, in all their ways of providing life, make you reflect on what a home is for you? How does having these reflective, dynamic and emotional objects change the way you feel at home or make a home? Maybe compared to when you didn't have certain paintings with you? Why is it important to have these paintings in your home as opposed to a gallery besides its mere accessibility? Even if that plays a large part in it."

ATTICUS: Simply put I think the home is an environment you build in the best way you can to foster those things necessary to life and important to oneself and loved ones; shelter, rest, food, etc. But it is also an architecture of feeling, emotion, and relationships. I think art contributes to this architecture of feeling, offering a node in the web of what home is, personalized, flavouring, calming, exiting, humorous, it is totally expansive in its small silly way.

Living with art is a balm for the eye and imagination. It is a place for sight, as the kitchen is for cooking. Your eyes touch these things, they run over the contours, and textures. Art is never definite, if you are a lover of vision, a voyeur, or at least it's been my experience, I constantly look at these things and wonder about them, meaning is never fixed, imagination is touched, triggered, runs wild, imagines alternatives, the relationship evolves through time. A painting I saw in my youth will mean something totally different to me after twenty odd years of having it in your horizon of vision. I think art allows a place for this type of open looking, pleasure and imaging to exist in the home, it is a nudge towards something. Again I'm back at the idea of art and objects as having a potential, this is one potential.

Having these things with me makes me feel grounded and alive. I love having them with me, they give a presence, and stave off loneliness. I'm happy often looking at art, or at least I have some emotional response, it could also be disliked. I can't really separate the idea of home from the art objects that are contained within it.

I think it's important to have these weird objects (paintings) living with us because they offer a chance for us to change, to think, and feel. And it's important that this is a process that takes place over time and by living with them. Seeing art in a museum or gallery is so different, so laden with the baggage of history and ideas of what is good and worthy and you're navigating the dynamics of public spaces. A weird scrap of paper you find you might really love, so you bring it into your home and let it work its potential out on you in your own environment. In my case I strive to make home a safe place of self

actualization, where I can live authentically, these objects contribute to my ability to achieve this important role in my life.

## Savannah Perry

### BIO

WILLEM: “Is there a specific object, or set, that makes you reflect on home-making and the way you live in a domestic space? How does it contribute to the way you understand your own home and how you live in it?”

SAVANNAH: “The object I am thinking of for this is a glass bottle that sits on my windowsill. It’s a green fish-shaped bottle that is purely decorative. I got it at a charity shop a few months ago. I have recently been assessing my relationship to the amount of clutter and items I have accumulated in my home and this empty bottle really grounds me in the importance of open/empty space and the ways we can fill a space with the immaterial. I am a maximalist and love to collect antiques and stones and seashells, but lately I am trying to find ways to be a maximalist without accumulating a large amount of stuff: trying to make the space feel ‘full’ without filling it with items. Sometimes this does technically involve items like flowers or a device that plays music, but I’m interested in the ways that the scent, sound, or light can fill a space beyond the matter of the object that is emitting it.

Here is a small reflection I wrote about the bottle and these thoughts:

*The glass, fish-shaped bottle on my windowsill filters the sunlight and produces a green glow in my room in the morning.*

*The bottle is empty, yet it transmutes light into a tranquil aura and brings me peace. Immaterial forms like fragrance, sound, and light can infuse a space in a way an object cannot. They create an original energy and a special charge that animates emptiness.*

*I have begun to see my home, like the fish bottle, as an empty vessel with the potential to come energetically alive through the immaterial. The small bottle’s ability inspires me to inhabit my home through the senses, and fill it with items that are beyond what I can touch.*

*The scent of rain outside when I open my back door, the calm dim of candlelight, and the rhythmic bursts of typing I hear when my partner works at their computer—these are the incorporeal forces found within the bottle that is my home. The scent drifts beyond my doorway, filling the entire house and the light touches more walls than the wax of a candle could reach. The space occupied by these forces extends far beyond the tangible forms that produced them. These things that cannot be held alchemize into a home that can be deeply sensed.”*

WILLEM: “Wow what a fantastic scene! I love this exploration of maximalism outside of hard physical objects—what an interesting way of envisioning and flipping the idea of maximum. One of the other interviewees has been bringing up a lot about collections and objects in the home acting as expanded potentials. These things could change your life, the home being a mode of transfiguration, if you let it. I totally see this in your description of how this glass bottle has changed the way you might understand



maximalism in your home. I'm curious how this experience might have better created what you might imagine as a home for yourself? This experience of now being prompted to sense deeply, how does that help you understand what a home might be for you, compared to a place that you might not consider your home? I guess more concretely what I'm trying to get at is why does the experience of sensing deeply make a place more of a home for you?"

SAVANNAH: "I think of home as something that reflects and extends the inner self. By filling it with elements that engage the senses, the home becomes a circuit: **I invest energy into the space, and it transforms and returns that energy back to me.** This makes inhabiting my home an intentional, almost alchemical process.

When I attend to the more ephemeral expressions of objects like sound, light, scent, I become more dynamic in how I inhabit the space. Rather than placing objects in static positions, I seek to let them 'sing,' like wind sculptures built to catch the breeze and release a tone. Placing the bottle where the sun will strike it is like tuning a TV antenna, aligning the house into harmony.

**This active role is unique to home. In other spaces I attune myself to them, but only at home can the space attune to me.** Through this reciprocal process, the home becomes more than my shelter; it becomes a site of resonance, an extension of my own inner workings and aspirations.

Because sensory engagement is transportive, the elements of my home can shift me; bringing calm, evoking memory, altering mood. These shifts reveal the home's power to transfigure, to transform emptiness into something alive with presence and meaning."

## Oliver Hunt

East London-based Oliver James Hunt is a film programmer, curator, and visual artist whose practice moves fluidly between galleries, cinemas, and unconventional spaces. Known for bringing together exhibition installations and offbeat screenings, he has worked with institutions such as the Institute of Contemporary Arts and Ciné Lumière at the Institut français, while also cultivating a presence in underground film circles. With a keen eye for beguiling aesthetics and underrepresented artistic voices, Oliver's work creates space for new ways of seeing and engaging with visual media.

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OLIVER: "If there's one object that makes me reflect on home-making and how I inhabit domestic space, it's a small, battered brown box—roughly five or six inches each side, that I've carried with me through several key stages of my life. It lives tucked away, often under coat hangers and wires, as if insisting on its role as a secret part of the household. Whenever I open it, it becomes a kind of private ritual. An intimate moment of reconnection with both my past and the sense of home I build around me.

The box isn't remarkable in itself: paper-brown, slightly stained, water-damaged in places; yet it has become a constant companion. Its wear and tear mirroring the shifting spaces I've inhabited. What it



holds is a personal and eclectic mix of miscellaneous objects that make sense only in the context of my own narrative.

In *The Poetics of Space*, Gaston Bachelard describes boxes, drawers, and chests as “containers of memory,” small interiors that externalise the psyche. He writes about their symbolic importance—their ability to conceal and reveal, to hold secrets and invite imagination. Opening this box is never just a physical act; it’s a psychological one. An invitation into a hidden interior world that feels as essential to my domestic life as the walls around me.

What makes this box feel “domestic” to me is its quiet permanence. It doesn’t demand attention, but it defines a kind of emotional architecture. In an increasingly digital age, where so much of our memory is cloud-stored, filtered, and algorithmically sorted, this analogue, tactile collection offers resistance. It’s chaotic and unsearchable. **There’s no metadata but in that disorganisation lies something deeply human: contradiction, forgetting, mystery.**

The objects inside don’t merely represent memories... They perform them. Their material presence anchors me. The mould on the edges of the box (a consequence of damp homes) resembles the uncanny fur of an animal. The scuffs and damage evoke a history not written down, but held, touched, moved. It is a domestic object not in the sense of being functional, but in being felt.

For me, this box functions as a kind of analogue “digital home”: a space where fragments of identity and history are stored, disconnected but interlinked. Unlike a digital archive, it isn’t curated for display or retrieval. Instead, it invites contemplation, speculation—even play. It reminds me that home isn’t just a place to live in, but a system of accumulated symbols that form an ongoing, incoherent autobiography. To preserve that sense of imaginative possibility, I won’t tell you what each item means to me. But here they are. Read them as clues, or simply as curiosities. They are the furniture of a miniature, internal home:

- TDK MiniDV SP/LP 60/90 ME labelled: FS A2 Is Anybody There?
- Wrapped rock candy labelled ‘EDIBLE NUCLEAR WASTE’
- Silver brooch of a lizard
- A postcard from Universal Studios Florida, early 1990s: men with guns, a horse, a building mid-explosion
- A miniature Toyota 2000 GT car with a geisha in the driver’s seat
- A ticket stub from Neptune’s Arcade: ‘Save for larger prizes’
- Miscellaneous yarn threads

This strange archive doesn’t fit cleanly into any idea of “living well” or being neatly organised. But it teaches me something important: that home, both physical and digital, is never only about structure. It’s about story, secrecy, and the ways we hold ourselves together across time.”

WILLEM: “I’m really drawn to the mystery of the object(s) and the secrecy that they can hold. Like a speech or a story told aloud, the content requires context and only being there can it produce a proper effect or meaning. We’d be lost on the meaning of the objects if we read about it.

It makes me wonder about the secrecy of things, and how they might hide and reveal themselves. How do you find yourself interacting with these objects? The home, perhaps at face value, would be something to interact with everyday, like a painting, a room or perhaps a feeling you get when "coming home": something perhaps interacted with more than once a day. I can imagine this box and its contents only reveal itself occasionally. How often do you find yourself interacting and thinking about these objects, and do you wish you could interact with them more, e.g. have them on a shelf? How does its secrecy add to its value for you as a home-making object?"

OLIVER: "For me, there is something essential about keeping these objects sealed away which is why I would not want them displayed around the house. There are a few things, personal to me, that I choose to use as decoration. Such as, like a small, palm-sized green stone painted with childlike flowers, which sits on my windowsill. I am not particularly precious about this item. In fact, I found it on a beach many years ago, yet it continues to remind me of a certain time in my life and of how simple, creative gestures can carry meaning beyond the context in which they were first made. For me, that's a positive physical object to have lying around.

The objects inside the box, however, feel different. They hold a particular kind of magic precisely because they remain contained. Their secrecy sustains a mystery all of its own. Nostalgia, I think, can become a kind of sickness. A longing to re-live the past and drag it into the present. This is not that. Instead, the value of the box lies in the way its contents reintroduce themselves to me, unexpectedly, in the present. They return as fragments of memory—evidence of another time, revived not as an escape, but as a quiet recognition. To be honest, I would rather not encounter them too often. **Their power rests in being remembered only after moments of transformation, like moving to a new city or falling out of love with somebody.**

What interests me most about these things is their ordinariness. The less distinctive they are, the more compelling. It is why I find charity shops so absorbing: they are like museums without context, filled with discarded bric-a-brac that once carried meaning. I am especially drawn to the kitsch and the excessive—the tat that resists refinement. Perhaps there is something of the future hoarder in me, though I doubt it would ever take hold to that extent.

By keeping these small, ordinary-yet-precious things inside the box, I resist the temptation to impose too much order on the material world around me. Instead, I allow their secrecy to work upon the imagination. If one gives in too often to nostalgia, the future risks becoming a repetition of the past, endlessly re-lived. By keeping these objects hidden, I preserve the possibility of rediscovery and of meeting past versions of myself afresh, and seeing how they have shifted in time."

**END**

## June

**June is a transfeminine maker and performer of digital instruments. She is a Ph.D. student with the Augmented Instruments Lab at Imperial College London, researching entanglement theories and digital musical instrument design. Performing live code as trampbunny, and live-looping saxophone as softshadow, she experiments with musical form, improvising soundscapes, dance music, and gestural controls.**

JUNE: "In my houseshare, which I've lived in for nearly 3 years, I have many objects that help cozy the space and add to my sense of home-ness. In terms of computing I have my laptop, my phone, my tablet, my projector, but I think the most important computing artifact here is Lucie's CDJ's in the living room. When I first moved in I had little knowledge of the DJ'ing world or the communities that surrounded it. Lucie (who still lives here) and Christian (who does not anymore) during my first year here would have a few late night sessions, practicing their techniques, lighting candles, arranging soft furnishings, and playing music that soothed and stimulated me. They're in a very specific scene, somewhere between deep techno, trance, downtempo, and ambient. They introduced me to many things that I now consider a core of my identity and my current lifestyle. The decks currently sit atop a large horizontal IKEA bookshelf, containing hundreds of vinyls, including my own.

During my DYCP grant last year I asked Lucie to teach me how to DJ using specific techniques and practices that I was interested in. I am learning beatmatching, archival practices, rekordbox organisation, and ambient mixing. It's a skill that I know will carry over into many parts of my life, as music carries me and motivates me to do most of the things that I do. And a few weeks ago, we had an event here where we set up the decks inside a large tent in the yard, hosting about 30 people who are passionate about ambient DJ'ing and curating the kind of space that we enjoy so much. There were hour-long slots for different people to fill, and I played my first live DJ set here, to a group of people, the majority of whom DJ professionally.

What makes this home my home in many ways is our shared love for music and electronic music culture. When people come over for the first time they notice the decks in the living room and we often have a conversation about my relationship to them and what the practice of DJ'ing means to either of us. I couldn't imagine living in this house any other way"

WILLEM: "This sounds really lovely! My new flatmate lives through music: he has two record players and an extensive collection, and is putting music on all the time. It really made me reflect on how essential music is to developing a mode of the home. I can imagine living in a space where a few of you are deep into music must be incredible.

I'm curious about what your experience is like having an object that can draw you in so deeply and long in the living room. What's the experience like entering the home, being around it, or walking by? I can imagine it could be similar to a guitar or another instrument where you might see it, use it for a few minutes, and then get off, or get trapped with it for an hour or two. Do you find yourself being pushed

away from it sometimes? Is it a constant pull? Or do you only use it when you feel like it ahead of time?"

JUNE: "I actually don't play the decks a lot. When I do it's in preparation for something, and it's the same for my housemate who owns them. Most of the time it's just good to have the decks out as a pull to live in the space and to be a space away from my laptop or phone. I like reminders to think about playing, curating, and listening to music. It's representative of the kind of life that we live even if it doesn't happen as often as we like. It's also a way to make plans together, preparing for the future and thinking about how we as a house want to spend time together."