

IRENE ANTONIA DIANE REECE

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*DON'T CRY FOR ME WHEN I'M GONE*



WOMEN & THEIR WORK

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JANUARY 18 - MARCH 6, 2025

AUSTIN, TEXAS

## DON'T CRY FOR ME WHEN I'M GONE

Irene Antonia Diana Reece's *Don't Cry for Me When I'm Gone* is more than an exhibition.

Reece navigates the complex and nonlinear landscape of loss through familial photographic archives in her new body of work, *Don't Cry for Me When I'm Gone*. Her practice speaks to personal and collective histories regarding memory, mourning, and our resistance to erasure. By delicately exploring grief and memory, she reclaims what it means to be seen and remembered by asserting her personal experience that might otherwise fade into silence.

Reece offers something often withheld in Black households—space. Space to grieve openly, to mourn without restraint, and to express emotions that have long been buried beneath layers of perceived strength, stoicism, and silence. Emotions—particularly sadness, anger, depression, and the like—are buried in stories never fully told, memories rarely shared. Through her installations, Reece refuses the silence that has traumatically conditioned generations of Black families to withhold grief. By sharing her own experience of mourning,



*Hey pooh!* (detail), 2025

Inkjet print, personal objects, dimensions variable



*I'm Always With You pt. iii*, 2024

Inkjet print, 20 x 26"

she offers the viewer invitations to linger, smile, cry, mourn, and remember. The spaces she creates—often evoking the warmth and familiarity of home—become sites for healing and hope. Emblematic of the space Reece creates, her installation *I will hold you tighter than ever before* presents the viewer with an altar to the departed. Installed as a grid, thirty richly sepia-toned portraits depict the beautiful faces of her ancestors. Below the portraits rests a

mound of flowers in various vibrant colors that stretch outward. The viewer is kept at a distance, encouraged to pause and reflect on the space between us and those we've lost, even as their presence seems to envelop us. The words separating the viewer from the altar—*I will hold you tight/my joy my dear black soul/I will give my all/my dear black soul/know that I'm with you/just call out my name/my dear black soul/till we meet again*—linger on the ground as a paradox of





*Hey pooh!, 2025*

Inkjet print, personal objects, dimensions variable

Cover Panel: *I will hold you tighter than ever before, 2025*

Inkjet prints, plastic flowers, alphabet noodles, dimensions variable

grief. Throughout her practice, Reece continuously honors the fluidity between past and present which is notably illustrated in *I'm Always With You pt. iii*. This visual gesture of binding, reverence, and protection, speaks to the ongoing nature of grief. To grieve is to assert that we are here, worthy of remembrance, and deserve space to be fully human—joys and sorrows alike. By archiving memories and protecting Black families' stories, Reece ensures that personal narratives are not erased. This fluidity is also visible in *I'm Always With You—Prelude*. In this image, Reece walks barefoot through an overgrown backyard, carrying a framed photograph of her loved one. The landscape where she stands, once alive with familial presence, now rests as a space of absence. She offers vulnerability in how she holds the memory of her loved one and moves through the space with them.

In giving voice to the silent archives of our past, Reece ensures that her ancestors will not be forgotten. *Don't Cry for Me When I'm Gone* is a testament that, even in loss, we continue to carry those we love with us. In offering this space, Reece metaphorically guides the bereaved with a simple but profound invitation to grieve unapologetically.

Alayna N. Pernell is an interdisciplinary artist, writer, and educator from Heflin, Alabama currently based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



*Don't Cry For Me When I'm Gone* (installation view), 2025



*I will hold you tighter than ever before* (detail), 2025  
Inkjet prints, plastic flowers, alphabet noodles, dimensions variable

# Irene Antonia Diane Reece CV

## EDUCATION

- 2020 MFA, Photography & Image-making, Paris College of Art, Paris, France
- 2018 BFA, Photography & Digital Media, University of Houston, Houston, TX

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 *Billie-James*, Project Row Houses, Round 55: Drive By II, Houston, TX
- 2021 *Home-goings*, Galveston Art Center, Galveston, TX
- 2017 *Mon Frère*, Lawndale Art Center: Project Space, Houston, TX

## GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 *Becoming Visible*, Autograph ABP, online  
*Chapter 3 of transfeminisms*, Mimosa House, London, UK  
*Con(tra) El Archivo*, Filter Photo, Chicago, IL  
*Transient Vistas*, FLATS, Houston, TX
- 2023 *Against Wind and Tide*, Centre les Étoiles de Jamaa El Fna, Marrakech, Morocco, curated by Christine Eyene  
*FF Projects: Manifold (Deluxe)*, Frieze: No.9 Cork Street, London, UK  
*Guest Room*, Der Greif, online, curated by David Campany and Taous Dahmani  
*The Bluest Monday*, Beeldend Gesproken, Amsterdam, Netherlands  
*"This Way"*, Contemporary Arts Museum Houston, Houston, TX  
*Who lit the fire?*, Contemporary Arts Center New Orleans, New Orleans, LA, curated by Anita N. Bateman, Ph.D.
- 2022 *Dak'Art*, La Biennale de Dakar, Maison de la Culture Douda Seck, Dakar, Senegal  
*FF Projects: Manifold*, 59 Greek Street, London, UK  
*Interference.*, Hessel Museum of Art, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY  
*Love is a House That Even Death Can't Knock Down*, Lawndale Art Center, Houston, TX  
*Part of Me...Shaping Mental Spaces*, FOTODOK, Utrecht, Netherlands, curated by Daria Tuminas  
*There Were Always People Like Me*, The Houston Artist Speaks Through Grids (THASTG), online, curated by Reyes Ramirez  
*Voice X PhotoVogue NFT Residency & Collection*, PhotoVogue Festival, online
- 2021 *An Active and Urgent Telling*, Schaefer Art Gallery, Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, MN  
*Guest Room*, Der Greif, online, curated by Anna-Alix Koffi and Sadikou Oukpedjo  
*MULTI*, Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center, online  
*Openwalls Arles*, Galerie Huit Arles, Arles, France  
*PhotoVogue Festival: Reframing History*, BASE Milano, Milan, Italy  
*Shaping Identity: A Non-Linear Journey*, The Baldwin Photographic Gallery, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN  
*Texas Biennial: A New Landscape, A Possible Horizon*, McNay Art Museum, San Antonio, TX  
*Unraveled. Restructured. Revealed*, Trout Museum of Art, Appleton, WI

- 2020 *Art Gallery: 40 Emerging, Texas-based Artists to Know*, Remezcla, online  
*BACKTALK*, The Center for Photographers of Color at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR, juried by Aaron Turner  
*FORECAST*, SF Camerawork, San Francisco, CA, juried by Elena Gross, Lester Rosso, and Michael Jang  
*Online Conversation #51*, Fiiiirst, online  
*Souls of a Perseverant Generation*, Community Artists' Collective, Houston, TX  
*Two Way Lens: Portraits as Empathy*, Humble Arts Foundation, online  
*XicanX: New Visions*, Centro de Artes, San Antonio, TX, curated by Dos Mestizx

## PRESS

- 2024 Gipson, Cemone Amerie. "Transient Vistas at FLATS, Houston". *Burnaway*, September 27, 2024.  
Afthab, Zara. "Transfeminisms: The radical exhibitions reframing feminist art practices". *Dazed*, November 8, 2024.  
Gipson, Cemone Amerie. "That Sunnyside Pride". *Burnaway*, November 8, 2024.  
Ledezman, Deanna. "Con(tra) El Archivo: Artists in Conversation". *The LatinX Project at New York University*, December 6, 2024.
- 2023 Hummler, Francesca "C/O Berlin Talent Award Winner and Shortlist 2022". *Der Greif*, January 19, 2023.  
"Artists to Watch 2022". *ArtConnect*, February 1, 2023.  
Marius, Marley. "In London, a New Exhibition Heralds the Creative Abundance of Black Female Artists". *Vogue*, April 14, 2023.
- 2022 Purcell, Barbara. "2021 Texas Biennial: A New Landscape, A Possible Horizon". *Art Papers*, January, 27, 2022.  
Maclean, Ruth "At Dakar's Biennale, the City Itself Is the Most Colorful Canvas". *The New York Times*, June 2, 2022.  
"We are thrilled to announce the artists of the first Photo Vogue NFT Residency in partnership with Voice". *Photo Vogue*, August 27, 2022.  
Knols, Karolien. "Exhibition in Fotodok Utrecht creates empathy for other people". *De Volkskrant*, September 20, 2022.
- 2021 "Reclaiming Representation: Irene Reece". *Unfiltered San Antonio*, February 22, 2021.  
Murff, Zora. "Q&A: Irene Antonia Diane Reece". *Strange Fire Collective*, February 28, 2021.  
Martin, Deborah. "4 emerging Texas artists in Texas Biennial show you should be following". *San Antonio Express-News*, August 13, 2021.  
Martin, Deborah. "4 emerging artists in the Texas Biennial exhibits you should be following". *Houston Chronicle*, September 7, 2021.  
Keever, Erin. "In this Texas Biennial, Texas is the protagonist". *Sightlines Magazine*, September 18, 2021  
Gipson, Amarie. "Irene Reece on Art and Healing: The Work Makes Me Feel Unapologetic". *Houstonia*, October 1, 2021.  
"Photo Vogue Festival 2021 • Reframing History". *Vogue*, October 21, 2021.





*I'm Always With You—Prelude, 2024*  
Inkjet print, 24 x 16"

## WOMEN & THEIR WORK

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*Photographs by Irene Antonia Diane Reece*

This project is supported in part by the City of Austin's Elevate Grant Program and the Texas Commission on the Arts.

Women & Their Work is a visual and performing arts organization located in Austin that serves as a catalyst for new ideas in contemporary art. Since 1978, Women & Their Work has created significant opportunities for artists and audiences to experience contemporary art through ambitious exhibitions, commissions of new work, performances and programs that inspire audiences of all ages. We have actively developed the careers of more than 2,000 women artists, presenting 345 visual art exhibitions, 167 music, dance and theater events, 31 spoken word and literary performances, 16 film festivals and 892 programs & education workshops with the goal of ensuring that women artists are represented in all forms of art. Women & Their Work helps meet an important need in Texas providing exhibition and performance opportunities and helping to attract critical attention to the work produced here; it is the only organization of its kind in the region and one of the few organizations in the United States that dedicates itself to the work of women artists. Nationally recognized, Women & Their Work

has been featured in *Art in America*, *The New York Times*, *ArtForum*, and on *National Public Radio* and was the first organization in Texas to receive a grant in visual art from the National Endowment for the Arts.

In 2020, the Smithsonian Archives of American Art acquired the archive of Women & Their Work ensuring that our entire history of the work of women artists and our website will be preserved in perpetuity.

In 2024, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York acquired all 160 catalogs (digital and physical) produced by Women & Their Work to date. These publications, as well as all future catalogs, will be housed at their Thomas J. Watson Library, one of the largest art research libraries in the world.



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