

## Statement of Mitigation

When I started Informing Contexts, my aim was always to experiment with the way that I approach my practice, having always created my work from a position of comfort albeit with the belief that the portrait was fundamental and the foundation to a strong narrative. When the pandemic took hold, I was forced to reconsider this approach and how I might continue to construct images that focus on the underlying idea of community and my own connection to it; the experimental approach would become fundamental to how this would be resolved.

I decided to go back to some of the texts that I had used to initially research and define the idea of community, through the Barthesian concept of the idiorrhythmic - living together and also separately (Barthes, 2012, p. 132), which actually would allow me the space to develop the project around the separation of community. Barthes even places value on distance: *"the gift of space: would be constitutive of (utopian) rule"* (p. 132), moving on to discussing how Nietzsche refers to a "pathos of distance" (p. 132), which seemingly sums up the collective feeling of community existential anxiety and creates a way that the work could be read: evoking feelings already present in an audience that has been spending so much time in the lockdown period. It also creates an opportunity to resolve some of the questions that I sort to answer at the start of the project; my connection to community is born out of liminality, an ambiguity of the rental trap and a generational sense of impermanence. There are links that can be made between my original intent and how the community has retreated, as Junichiro Tanizaki states: *"And they have no recourse but to shrink back into their houses"* (Tanizaki, 2001, p. 62). As a result, I have embraced the disparate aesthetic in the work with the contrasting placement of the actual and the abstract, as it reflects the idiorrhythmic and the separation; therefore, my intent has not changed, merely evolved.

The biggest challenge is that I was unable to continue shooting portraits and, although I am happy with them, it would have been beneficial to continue developing this part of the project because as this was representative of pillars of the community, which is where my intention was leading me. However, using the portraits that I had already shot, together with the abstract images from within my home, I was able to create a result, which I feel works to show the contrast of separation. The challenge of creating work during the pandemic has actually resulted in a positive impact in my approach, evolving to be more conceptual and I feel one that resolves many of the ideas and

questions that I set out to answer.

The community and its new barriers have created a new collective vocabulary in the idea of distance and existential anxiety, which is something that I intend to explore moving forward to see if the community can re-connect post Covid-19.

## **Bibliography**

Barthes, R., 2012. *How to Live Together: Novelistic Simulations of Some Everyday Spaces (European Perspectives: A Series in Social Thought and Cultural Criticism)*. Translation Edition ed. New York: Columbia University Press.

Tanizaki, J., 2001. *In Praise of Shadows*. London: Vintage.

THE  
PATHOS  
OF  
**DISTANCE**  
IN  
TWO  
PARTS

# PART: I

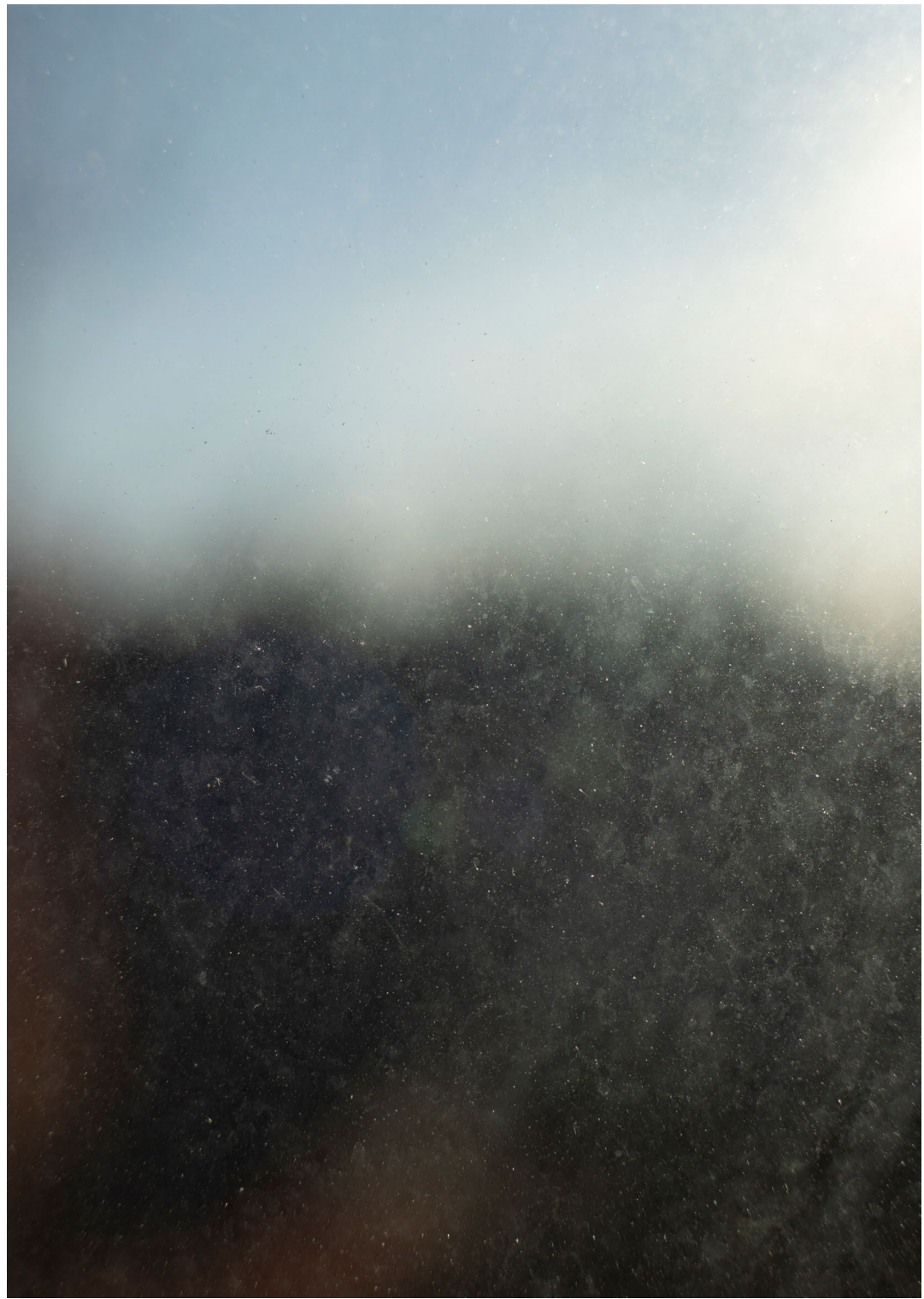
**Stephen, Watford Deaf Society** Window #2198

**Billy, Barber on St Albans Rd** Window #2236

**Cephas, School Caretaker** Window #2207

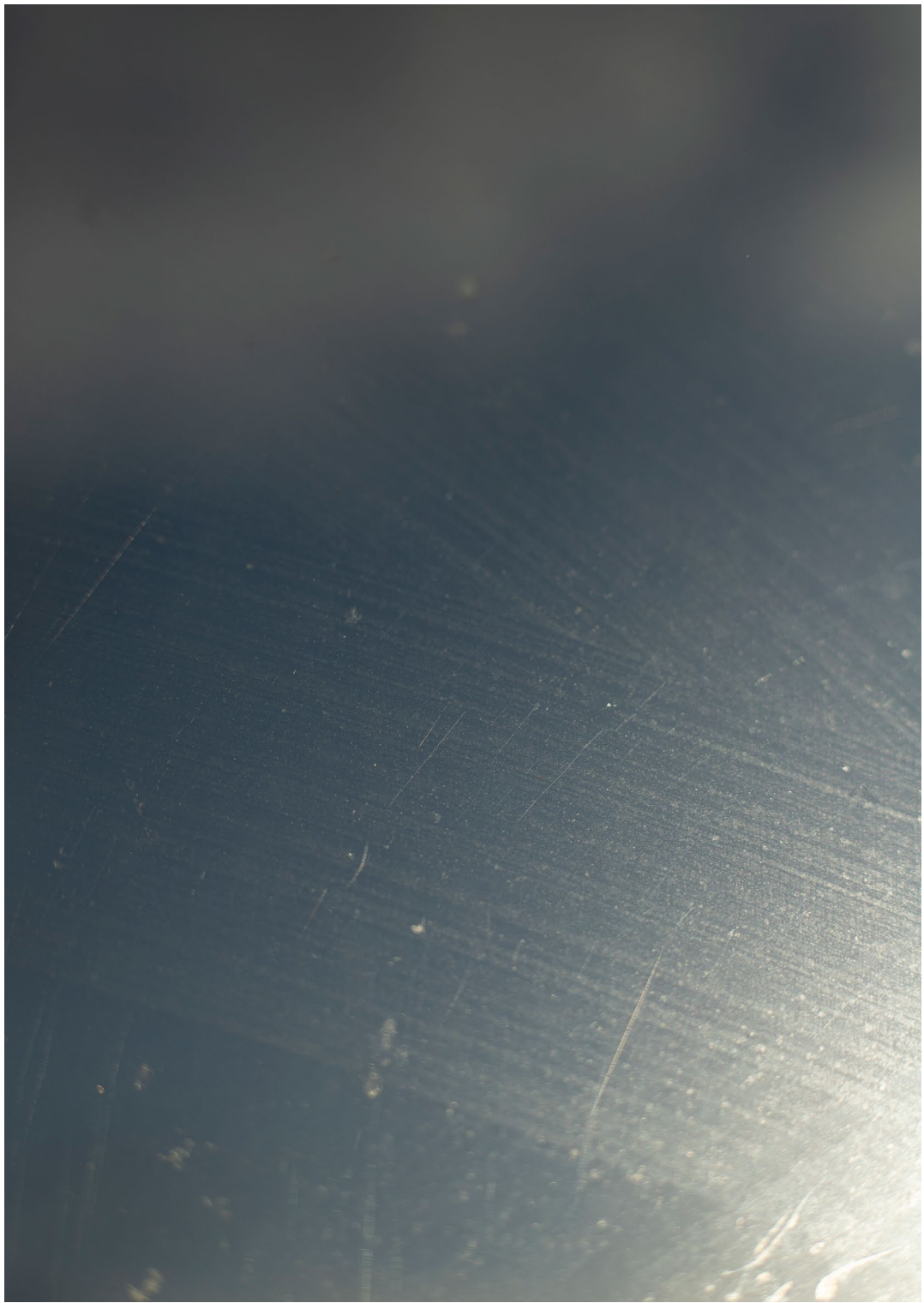
**Helen, Volunteer Litter Picker** Window #2233

**Mark, Patron of Elim Food Bank** Window #2225











# PART: II

*“And they have  
no recourse  
but to shrink  
back into their  
houses”*









