



I AM COMPETITION BRIEF



The brief:

self-identity

noun; the perception or recognition of one's characteristics as a particular individual, especially in relation to social context.

Identity is what makes people individual. It is made up of all the things that make you who you are. It's formed by a variety of components: people (family, friends, communities), places, culture, heritage and shaped by our experiences in life.

However, that journey of discovering your sense of being who or what you are is not often an easy one. It's ever-evolving, complex and sometimes unsettling. For those living in Kakuma Refugee Camp in Kenya who have experienced conflict, suffering and displacement as a result of civil war in their home countries, their identities can quickly become eroded; a feeling of a lost identity, a disconnection between who and where they were and who and where they are.

My Start, through its art and film workshops with the young people of Kakuma, are helping them express themselves creatively. Art has provided a unique platform for them to explore their own sense of being, celebrate their individuality and enhance their ability to reclaim a sense of identity and purpose that has been impacted as a result of war and suffering.

What does self-identity mean to you?

How have the experiences in your life, the people you know, the places you've been, the passions you have, shaped who you are?

In response to this brief, we would like to you to explore the theme of self-identity using the work from Kakuma as inspiration.





Submission criteria:

Using a chosen piece of Kakuma art or film as inspiration, create your personal response to the work and story of its creator. There are four categories to choose from:

- **Film & photography**
- **Drawing, painting & mixed media**
- **Sculpture**
- **Creative writing**

Please submit **one** piece of work from **one** of the above categories and clearly note how the work you have seen from Kakuma within that category has inspired your response.

The size/proportions of your piece should be included as well as a title with a written explanation (max 200 words) to explain your connection to the chosen piece from Kakuma.





Category:



Film & Photography

Piece 1: Film

[We are Kakuma](#)

This film won runner up for best creative response at the Imperial War Museum short film competition, 2016. The film is a montage of short films that captures life in Kakuma and each mini film is sequenced in three stages: *I AM*, *THEY ARE*, *WE ARE*.

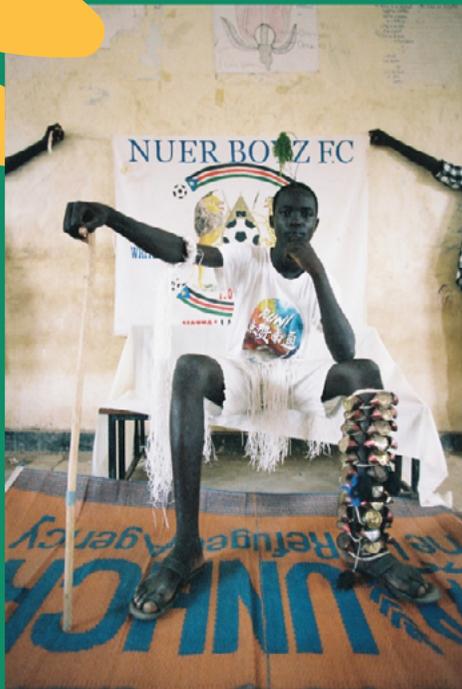
I AM looks at the personal individual experiences of the students who made the films and how they felt when they arrived at the camp, *THEY ARE* looks more broadly out at the camp from the perspective of the outsider and *WE ARE* examines the idea of the collective; how the community of Kakuma has been pulled together through a common identity and shared hopes, fears and dreams yet remain a group of unique individuals from varying backgrounds and ethnicities.



Category:

Film & Photography

These photos were taken by the refugees; they carefully selected personal items to use as props, set up their own backdrops and wore clothes they felt represented their cultural heritages and mixed identities.



Piece 2: Photography



Piece 3: Photography

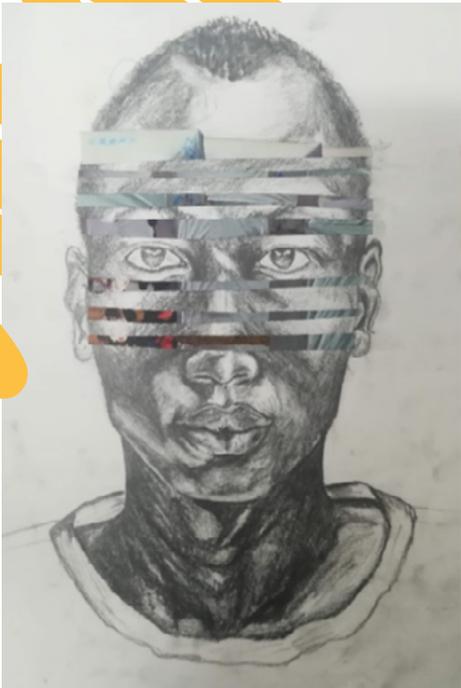


Piece 4: Photography

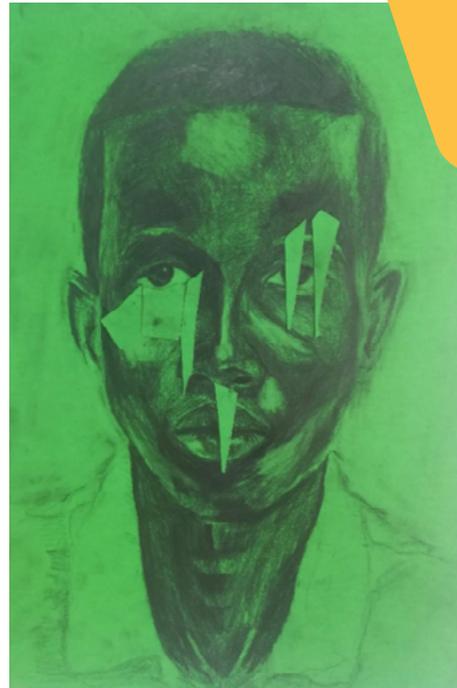
Category:

Drawing, painting & mixed media

These drawings were drawn in real life from observation. In some of them, the faces are obscured by pieces of stuck-on photos (some of the camp) or have missing pieces. This is to represent their identities as refugees: blighted, altered, erased, marred and transformed through the refugee experience.



Piece 5: Drawing



Piece 6: Drawing

Category:

Drawing, painting & mixed media

This collaged image contains photographs of the artist and circular images of their dreams and thoughts. The representation of circles is deliberate to portray their dreams as 'other worlds', locked in a place that seems unobtainable and foreign.



Piece 7: Mixed media

Photographs, taken by the students of each other, were printed and transferred on to tent canvas. They were then dried and stitched onto using embroidery thread. Embroidery is practiced by all South Sudanese women and is culturally significant as they make enormous bedsheets that are highly valued and are given in marriage.



The stitch work on these portraits was used by the students to add more African and tribal qualities to the faces. Some of the colours were chosen to represent the local landscape and the colours of their national flags.

Piece 8: Mixed media

Category:

Sculpture

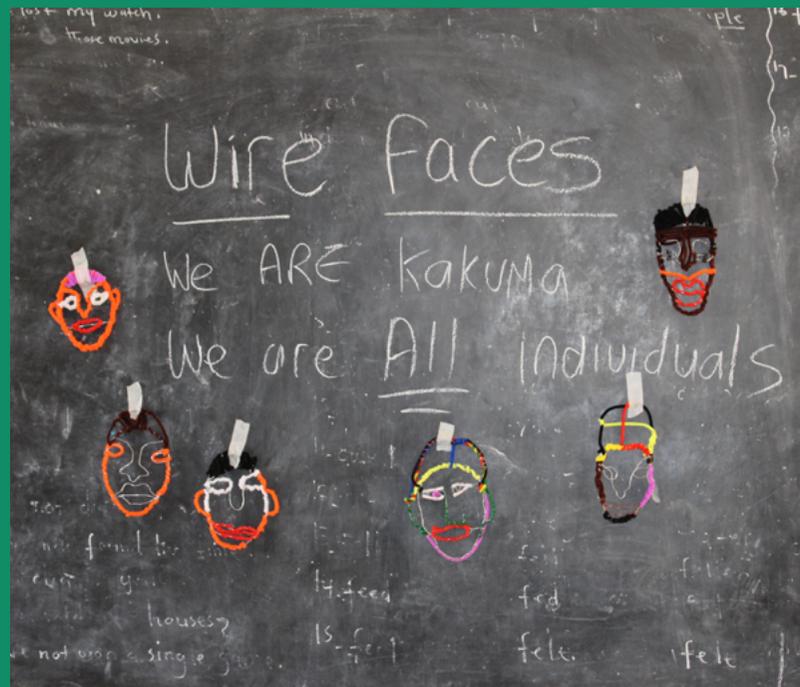
Each of our Kakuma students made wire faces – some used thread and coloured pipe cleaners to decorate, others kept theirs flat and simple and some made 3D heads.

Taught by an Ehtiopian refugee artist, many of our students made traditional African masks using a rough paper mache technique. The masks are moulded using the watery/paper congealed mixture, left to dry in the sun and hardened using mod-roc. We then decorated them using gold and silver leaf.

The results reminded them of buried hidden treasure which they felt represented themselves, trapped and hidden in the dust bowl of Kakuma, held back from reaching their true potentials.



Piece 9A: Sculpture



Piece 9B: Sculpture

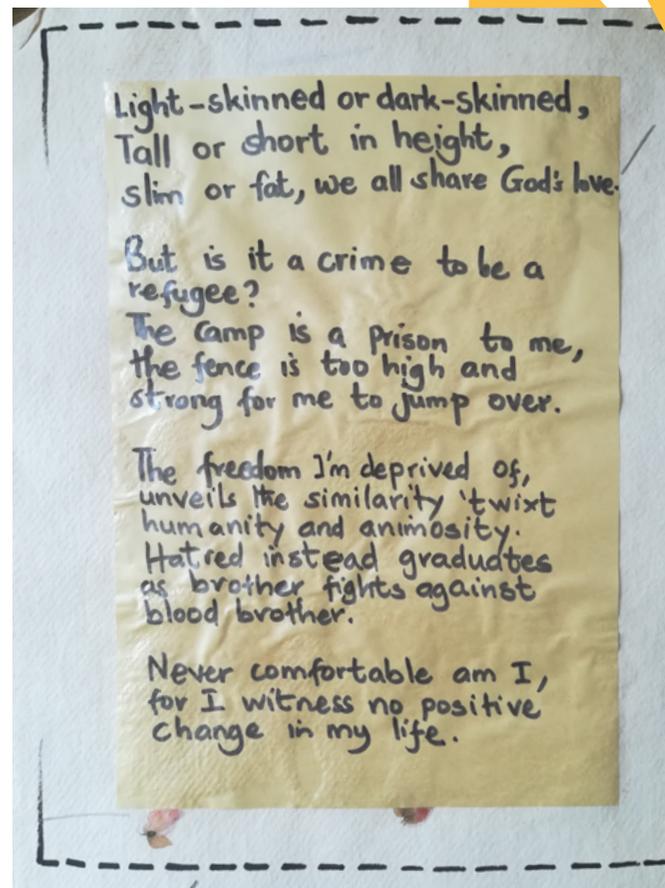
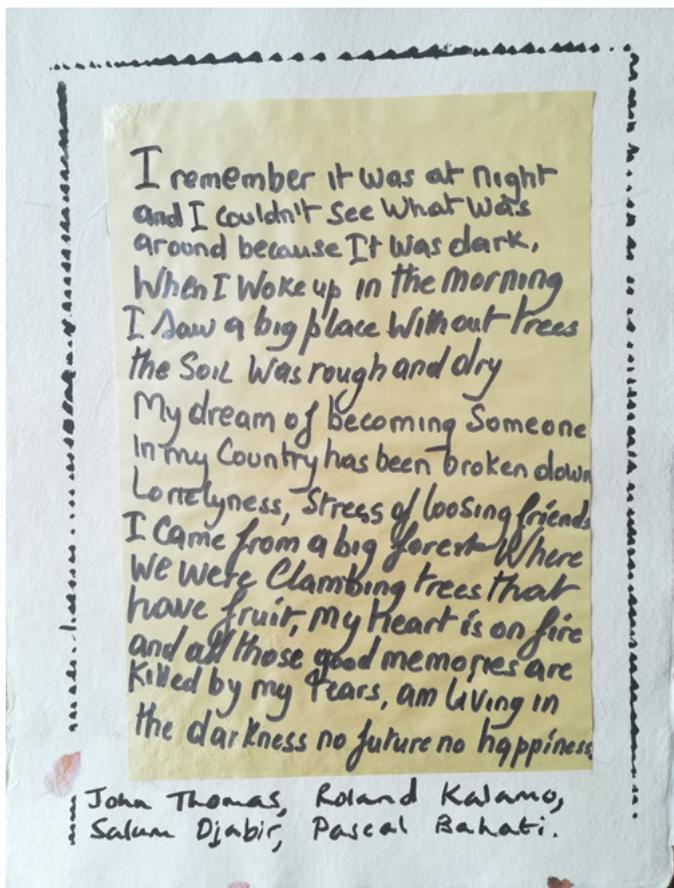


Piece 10: Sculpture

Category:

Creative writing

The students were asked to write short pieces of writing or poems to explain how they felt when they arrived in Kakuma for the first time. Many of the young refugees struggle to express the pain of their experiences and find writing them down a safer and easier outlet.



Piece 11: Prose

Piece 12: Poetry

How to submit:



All schools should submit their competition entries in a single file via 'We Transfer' to hello@mystartproject.co.uk. This can be an uploaded image or scanned copy of the work.

All submission should be labelled with the appropriate school name and name of the creator of the work, e.g. **My Start_Schools Project 2019_John Smith College_Joe Bloggs**.

Schools that enter the competition are invited to book in a complimentary assembly to provide your students with a brief introductory talk about Kakuma Refugee Camp and to view some of the artwork from the camp in person.

We will be available for assemblies Monday 24th June till Friday 12th July 2019.
Please contact amy@mystartproject.co.uk to book in an assembly.

**Submission deadline for schools
Friday 11th October 2019**

**Winners will be announced on
Monday 28th October 2019**

