

Pictures of Passion

Senegal, Africa

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Dakar, Senegal

Looking out over the horizon of the city before me I see the tops of buildings that are oh so beautiful, yet constructed differently than anything I have ever seen before.

Driving through the people filled streets and I wonder what had happened in these people's lives that made them so inclined to revert to the streets to make a living, hagel people, yet be so kind and open-hearted.

As I try to remember what it felt like to really understand what I was feeling on top of those steps looking out over the horizon and being in the center of action, I realize that trying to recreate that feeling is hard since having to be there in that moment is the only way to really know what it was like.



Artful Deceit

These waters have seen everything from birth to death, from suicide to murder, and flesh that has eroded into bone. Gorée Island, is it The House of Slaves, it is still today, the home of many artists, mothers, children, and families. It is the home of ancestors who died in the waters thinking they were going to freedom. These waters are beautiful, though, deceiving to the eye of the looker.



Old School House; New Future

The door, some would say rustic, many who call this home would say opportunity.

The window, some would say a view into the nature outside, many who call this home would say a view into the future.

The building made by their ancestors with cement, rocks, and scraps of natural resources provided for them, some would say this is nothing but a building placed upon the ground, many who live here know it as a school where the children go in order to learn about their history of the island they call home.



Bars Defeated in a Place Full of Hope

The cracks in the concrete, the paint of the artists, the copper bars of the architecture, the roofs of the houses, the lights that surround the island all represent the broken and cracked people and places on the island. The creativity and development of those who live on the island. The ever-holding grasp the people who call this island home have and where these people feel most trapped and also free with a view overlooking the cold, not so bare waters. The lights illuminate the history of their home, the art of their people, the love of their families, and the forgiveness of the tensions.



Baobab Seeds

Within this place of cracks, dust, and a place that has little to provide for its people grows a product of life. The Baobab tree* grows in an arid, dry, and heated climate.

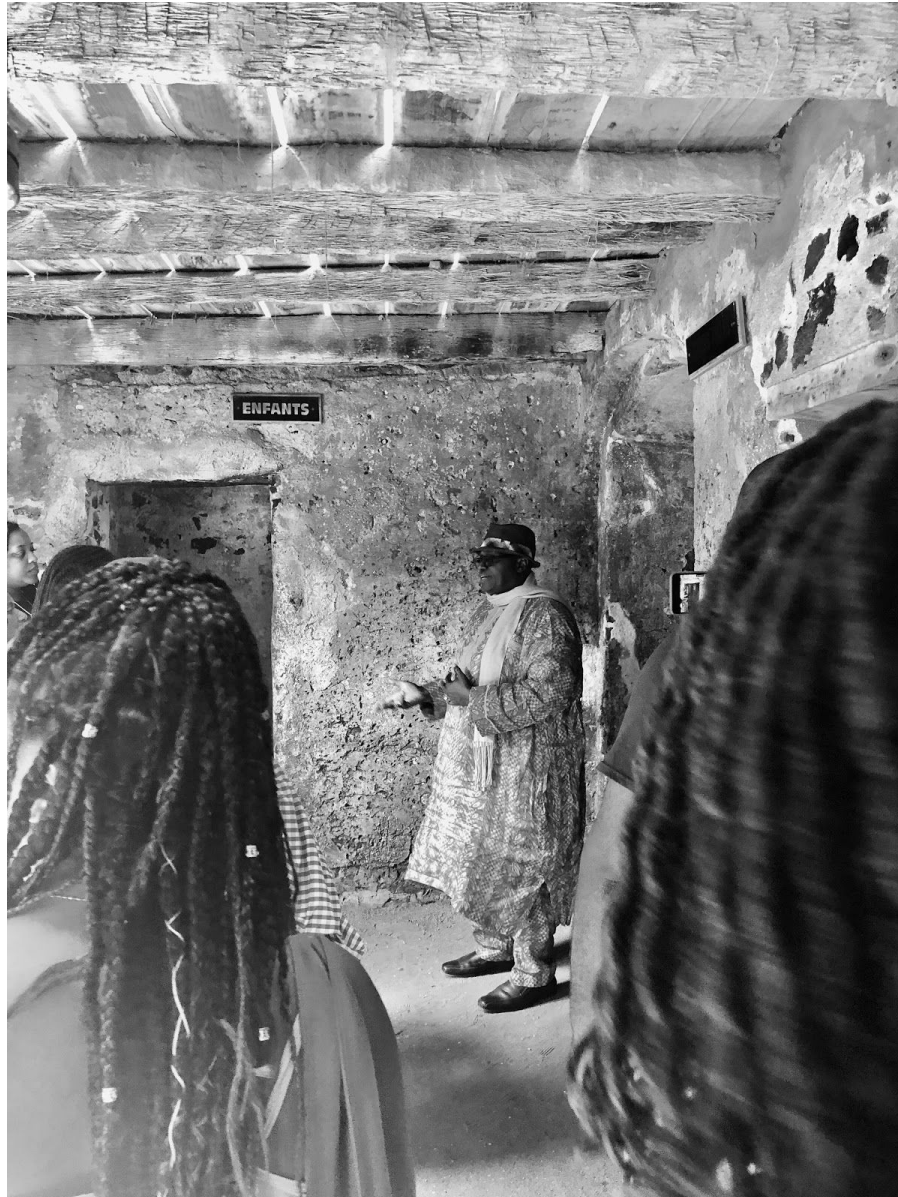
I changed in the heated, arid, and dry climate. I grew up in the place where the natives grew up. I was given a perspective of growing life and positivity once I had been watered with the light of the heated sun that day on "Memory Island".

*The baobab tree represents life and positivity.



The House of Slaves

The shutter of my bones don't relate to the shutter of the shackles against their bodies that decided their destiny, which was already chosen for them. I stand here, staring down the Door of No Return listening for any bit of hope, love, or power and all I hear is innocence that lies beyond the concrete walls where dehumanization was the subject of the slave owner's brainwashed, messed, and fucked up novel.



Les chambres. The Rooms.

Enfants. Femmes. Vierges. Hommes. La Porte Sans Retour. Trois mois s'écoulent avant de mettre les voiles. Les chambres sont petites, les personnes au pouvoir en sont la raison. Aucune liberté, aucune liberté, être contrôlé et dans de petits espaces sont tout ce que nous savons.

Children. Women. Virgins. Men. The Door of No Return. Three months pass before setting sail. The rooms are small, the people in power are the reason. No freedom, no freedom, being controlled and in small spaces is all we know.



The Door of No Return

Pressure in my chest as I stand in the hallway leading up to a place of unknown. As tears stream I am asked *“how are you holding up”*. I look up realizing I am not alone on this journey and I answer *“I have this pressure in my chest and words I can’t express. These feelings I have never felt before for people I’ve never met and never will. Why are people so horrid? Listening to the screams of innocent people and giving false hope”*

“You’re not alone,” she said.

As I stood on the balcony looking out over the ocean, tears ran down, and my heart as still as the innocent stood not knowing what their future holds, but hands shaking because I was as nervous for them as I have ever been for myself.



Three Children & One Mission

I look into the eyes of the beautiful children in front of me, wanting to help them, wanting to teach them, and wanting to protect them of the world around us. Fatima, when I look into your eyes I see what the future could hold if there was a solution to world hunger, Abdou, when I look into your eyes I sense the innocence of childhood, and Cheikh, when I look into your eyes I see the what power and resilience looks like in a child that has so much potential ahead of him. While I look at this picture I remember in that moment my heart, being so full and empty in the same minute.



Handful of Happiness

Ragged jersey, smile.

Hard work, sweat, dirty, no bath

Smiles all around, joy.



A Joyful Spirit

Kick the can, only this was a bottle that got away from him. The spirit of you, my child, though you don't know it, you have the world in your hands and your exquisitely playful spirit is one that should forever be cherished.



Food Stands & Open-Hearted

Working in the hot
sun, providing for her child.
Food for sale with love.



Wide Boats & Skinny Boats

Being a boat in the water, swaying back and forth, and going down stream. I am used to following the crowd and being scared of falling out of the current. Standing still or rowing through the current. I find myself in a wide boat following the current, rather than on the skinny boat awry.



Child's Play

These children gathered around me, I thought of my childhood and how different it was than what I had experienced with these children. The amount of love they show, it's more than I would've had at that age. The amount of gratitude they had for attention, and the happiness in their faces when given hugs. Many inconveniences, though lots of love.