

# Conflicted

This exhibition is part of LCB Depot's Film 2025, a season of exhibition & events exploring photography and film, part of FORMAT 25, the UK's leading international contemporary festival of photography and related media.

The exhibition at LCB Depot runs from 3<sup>rd</sup> March - 17<sup>th</sup> April 2025 and at Phoenix from **April 11<sup>th</sup> to July 25<sup>th</sup>**

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## *z' {Albuquerque}*

Raisa Watkiss and Manga Brothers

"'Z' walks out of a desert test site without memory, naked, eyeless, without hair, teeth and fingerprints. There is a scar, however, low on his torso in the form of a misshapen letter 'z'. Who is he? The 'W' words circle, what? When? Why?

Meanwhile, the unborn mutation Nada dreams in her 'crawl space of the gods' ("Where is Mom in all of this?"), spinning her own mythos and creating false pasts, presents, and futures near and far...

Nada dreams of multiple lives: nuclear dreams of girlhood in “Nagashima”, days in Danzig nurtured by her defecting rocket scientist father, and those days on the run, holed out in a pink bordello in Mexico, burning barns and bigger things because the fire was part of her, her genes, her make-up.

After all, Z on its side is an N.

Music Manga Bros Visuals Raisa Watkiss

### **Artist Bio**

In a land far, far away in a distant present set in a yesterday that will never become tomorrow. Work that resonates with the demons that occupy the mind. Forgetfulness is brought on by anxiety that searches for cultural understanding, awareness of self, and place in the conflicting cultural dystopia of the postmodern condition.

It's always tricky because, as the creator, you have multiple layers in your concept and motivation for producing work. I suppose the challenge is prioritising what needs to be communicated. For clarity, it can be essential to hold back on certain elements. There is a constant need to interpret my mental health, which has prompted many of life's experiences: anxiety, loss, and a mind that, on the one hand, feels cluttered while, on the other, is filled with intrusive thoughts that have led to two failed suicide attempts. Hence, the motivation to visualise what is primarily invisible and present it in a format that satisfies conceptual understanding, where the idea remains a catalyst for exploration.

Using nostalgia as something to hold onto or destroy serves as a method of communication; it is not necessarily the concept itself. This discussion revolves around a vehicle through which a dialogue is opened. For some, it may trigger thoughts of memory loss and mental health issues, while others

may perceive it as a form of social change. However, the disquieted mind and the struggle are evident. The erosion of nostalgia and the cluttered mind searching for relevance and answers highlights the importance of engagement and seeking attention to initiate such dialogues. My struggle with lucidity, exacerbated by crippling mental anxiety, is reflected in the work—at times chaotic and others devoid of the physical. My nostalgic enterprise should not be confused with reminiscence of the good old days but rather as an exploration into the dark mind of the distressed, the loss of lucidity and conscious self-awareness, the demons that occupy the mind, and the intrusive thoughts that dictate actions and outcomes.

The fascination with the disintegration of art, the abstraction and liberation of the concept, the notion of post-aesthetic value, whereby the object becomes a less relevant component in the decision-making process. The ideas, the collection of ideas, and the journey undertaken will remain at the forefront of my practice, continuing to explore the contradictions between the use of obsolete technology and the evolution of contemporary dialogue surrounding mental distress.

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[www.raisawatkiss.org](http://www.raisawatkiss.org)