

Porsha Olayiwola

Excerpt from the choreopoem *Black & Ugly as Ever*, 2018

Poem in response to *Qhamukile, Mauritius*, 2019, on view on the Anne H. Fitzpatrick Façade

In *Being Muholi: Portraits as Resistance*, on view at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Feb 10- May 8, 2022

my mother say // you should always wear earrings // how they gonna know you a girl //
boy // you black // you so black you blue // you stay out the chlorine in them
swimmings pools in that summertime out in that sunshine // cause you gone get blacka
// don't dress too dark // girl // bright colors for a bold bold gal // you blacka
than your daddy and he was born in africa // you bigger than your daddy // girl //
and he a man // and you a thunder thigh // and i'm a chicken little // you want some
chicken // som' chitterlings // collards // greens // don't eat too much // girl //
shine // but stay out the sun // skin ain't nobody gonna know how to love // ain't
nobody gonna love you // you don't know how to pick up a broom // you don't know how
to pick up a spoon and stir // girl // and clean girl // girl // wear a dress // girl
// boy // get dressed // girl // for church // wear purple // wear yellow // it
bounce off your complexion like a song // like a sweet // sweet // sweet procession
// girl // here try these // here put this on // it make you look mausoleum pretty //
make you look pretty // how // now // wow // smile and show em your pearlys // now
let them see them night gums // i don't know how you got so mansion build when your
mama a shack // i mean // i don't know how you got so vaseline shiny when girl you
this black // here // sat yourself down somewhere // not on your knees for they get
spots we can't wipe out // girl // sit here, between my legs // let me comb your hair
black // put some berets in it // make you look real nice