

## Twenty Parakeets

One thing that I was really conscious of travelling around the coast, is that though this project was about Black people and history in Britain, not every photograph needed to be of a person.

So there are doors, beads, and birds that might capture something of the Black experience too. I was in Plymouth walking by the train station at sunset when an intoxicated homeless man came up to me. I thought he was going to ask for some money, but instead he said, '*Look at that, look behind you*'. And I turned around tentatively and saw that there was a tree surrounded by concrete near a car park full of bright yellow parakeets.

There have been some really interesting projects that put cameras into the hands of homeless people and they're interesting because of the unusual times and places that have been inhabited and the things and the beauty that are noticed by the people that nobody else does.

I took this photograph using my flash, but it was kind of at the wrong speed, so only lit up the top part of the tree. But once again, I wanted to embrace this failure. It seemed to capture the moment better than I could have imagined. And Roger wrote a poem in the book linking this photo to the experience of immigrants in Britain, and I think it's one of my favourite pairings in the whole series.