**Unreal Estates**

Guinea Street, Bristol

Ruth Wallace and Ken Elkes

After shortlisting a number of houses for sale in Bristol, Ken and I eventually decided on one built in the 1700s, which is a comfortable family home, but built on the profits of suffering from the transatlantic slave trade. The physical size of the house belies its huge, sprawling history and our interest lay in its ambiguities and dualities. We wanted to highlight the slightly uneasy relationship of the current house with its dark past and evoke the memories and narratives held within the walls.

After initial research and sketches, I made large black and white drawings which involved stretching sheets of paper on drawing boards, coating the paper with gesso, then covering the whole sheet with compressed charcoal to obtain an opaque, velvety black. I then scraped away the image using erasers and sandpaper. For one of the images, I used an old wallpaper pattern, suggestive of a bygone era, which I printed onto the paper before covering with charcoal and lifting out the image.

**Titles and details**

1. Guinea Street 1, (hallway), 2021, compressed charcoal on gesso-prepared paper, 119 x 70 cms

2. Guinea Street 2, (stairwell), 2021, compressed charcoal on gesso-prepared paper, 119 x 70 cms

3. Guinea Street 3, (basement steps), 2021, compressed charcoal on gesso-prepared paper, 70 x 119 cms