The light in London is always either high morning or late afternoon. They told me to prepare for the damp, for the chill, they never told me that the city existed under the most blindingly brilliant veil of gold that both threw shadows into the darkest of purples and illuminated already illuminated bright spots. When the sun is that close and that straightforward in its purpose it feels almost impossible to not look at the world more intensely.

I was in London to study the art of collecting, to visit museums and collections and observe how people presented the things that they deemed important to look at. I was learning how to see things instead of just looking. Through this aspect of seeing, I feel that the trip had a deeper focus of observing people, how people are, and how and why we love both objects and beings. Observing art is an intricate method of observing people, it is a methodical mode of people watching. At the same time that an object is incredibly intimate it also becomes interpersonal, since upon seeing the object you are also aware that someone else has also looked upon this.

I think it was the tiny subtleties of the differences of London compared to home that best engaged this mode of looking. I didn’t explicitly notice that the sun felt so different until confronted with it spilling into one of the multitude of private parks. Thusly so, seeing cars on the opposite side of the road or noting a significant difference in the acceptable amount of eye contact made with a stranger all lent itself to a heightened sense of just noticing what was going on around me. I would go from engaging with a gallery exhibition more deeply than I ever had before; to walking on the street and noting a similar experience with everyone I passed. Londoners famously keep to themselves, but also maintain a hidden intimate unity with their peers; therefore when walking through the streets or navigating my own path through a crowded gallery I was always blissfully alone, and at the same time wondrously connected to everyone around me.

Therefore I will always think of London as a (surprisingly) sun-drenched city, as well as a place where things both seen and unseen were consistently illuminated for me. I know that this revealed mode of looking will lend itself to my art making process, and I hope that it will stay with me through the rest of my life. I realize now that London wasn’t just about beauty or learning about the curatorial process, but about seeing through looking.