BLOOD
+
WATER

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Blood + Water is an immersive audiovisual experience and podcast miniseries that seeks to challenge the traditional idea of Family. Consisting of the thoughts, expressions, and ideas of individuals from underrepresented and marginalised backgrounds, this installation gives a platform to the voices we do not often hear from, to express their stories and experiences of family through movement, visuals and sound.

The installation soundscape recalls memories, textures sensations. Motifs, moments of calm and return and expressions of rapid change and tumult. The visuals provide both a utopian and dystopian feel of Family.

Presented in a specially curated digital space, attendees will have the freedom to connect intimately to the experience. Help us shape local and regional community cultural awareness, and challenge perceptions.

THE PROJECT PRODUCERS

L U C I N E

INSTAGRAM

Member of the Fi.ELD 2020 cohort

L U C I N E IS A MULTI-INTERDISCIPLINARY MUSIC ARTIST THAT BELIEVES IN; USING A CROSS ARTS APPROACH TO CREATE UNIQUE, IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES FOR PEOPLE TO ENJOY AND FEEL EQUAL IN. AS A CITIZEN OF THE WORLD, THEY WISH TO RETELL STORIES OF THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE INCLUDING THEIR OWN, ENABLING THEM TO EXPRESS THEIR INNERMOST THOUGHTS & FEELINGS. WITH A MENTAL HEALTH DIGITAL PUBLICATION ON THE WAY AND A KEEN INTEREST IN COLLABORATIVE WORK THERE IS MUCH ON THE HORIZON FOR THIS ENIGMATIC ARTIST.

"Family blurs the lines of love and hate"

"This experience has been unimaginable. To see this project come alive is pure magic. Thank you to every single person involved for showing interest, contributing and most of all for believing in the idea. A special thanks to my right hand Kim Chi. You are simply formiddable.

KIM CHI LE

INSTAGRAM

Member of the Fi.ELD 2020 cohort

KIM CHI LE IS A VIETNAMESE/FINNISH DANCE ARTIST BASED IN LONDON. RECENTLY GRADUATED FROM TRINITY LABAN, SHE NOW WORKS WITHIN DANCE AND CREATIVE INDUSTRIES AS A DANCER, CHOREOGRAPHER, PHOTOGRAPHER, VIDEOGRAPHER AND PRODUCER. IN HER WORK SHE EXPLORES THEMES AROUND IDENTITY, RACE AND IMMIGRATION. SHE IS PASSIONATE ABOUT PRODUCING EVENTS AND SUPPORTING ARTISTS.

"Family is a memory, nightmare and dream."

"Blood + Water has been an amazing journey and I'm happy I had a chance to work with all the talented creatives, especially the one and only LUCINE. It's been a lot of learning and discovering from the first ideas until launching the installation. I'm happy we are finally able to share our work to the audience."

LUCINE

KIM CHI LE

THE DIGITAL CURATORS

ARDA AWAIS

TWITTER | WEBSITE

ARDA IS A CREATIVE CODE AND CO-FOUNDER OF IDENTITY 2.0, A CREATIVE ART PROJECT WHICH EMPOWERS PEOPLE TO EXPLORE THEIR DIGITAL IDENTITY. SHE CURRENTLY WORKS AT SOHO HOUSE'S DIGITAL TEAM AND HAS DANCE MOVES THAT WILL PUT YOU TO SHAME. AN ALUMNI OF BLACK GIRL FEST ACADEMY 2020, SHE WAS MOST RECENTLY SPOTTED IN ELLE DECORATION UK AS A 'YOUNG 'VOICE IN DESIGN.

ARDA AWAIS

SAVENA SURANA

TWITTER | WEBSITE

A PROUD PUN USER, SAVENA IS THE OTHER CO-FOUNDER OF IDENTITY 2.0! CURRENTLY, SHE WORKS IN MARKETING FOR THE INSTITUTE OF IMAGINATION. SHE'S BEEN NAMED ONE OF THE DRUM'S FUTURE MARKETERS AND AS "PRETTY COOL" BY HER MUM.

SAVENA SURANA

"This has been a great opportunity to digitally transform an interesting exhibition, which poses the questions "What is a family?". We love the interdisciplinary approach this project has taken, and it's been exciting to see so many talented people come together for this festival!"

THE MUSIC PRODUCER

NWAKKE

INSTAGRAM

NWAKKE IS AN INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTIST, DANCER, MUSICIAN AND DJ WITH A PRACTICE IN SOUND, VIDEO AND WRITING.

"Working on this project has been really interesting, a challenge between balancing my own current family pains and facing these issues in the installation.
Family is something that we cannot separate from ourselves and our personal histories.
It is something that unites us also; in recovery, healing, finding new families and love or simply in celebration and reflection of the places we come from. Not set in stone, and ever present - the story and question of family is growing and changing as I do."

NWAKKE

EAST LONDON DANCE

EAST LONDON DANCE IS A CHARITY THAT SPECIALISES IN BRINGING DANCE TO PEOPLE AND PEOPLE TO DANCE, THROUGH AMBITIOUS PERFORMANCES AND PROGRAMMES TO GET ALL AGES DANCING.

AS THE LEAD PRODUCER OF CREATIVE DANCE EXPERIENCES FOR THE PEOPLE OF EAST LONDON AND BEYOND. WE ARE A SECTOR LEADER ADVOCATING FOR THE CONSIDERABLE HEALTH, WELLBEING, SOCIAL AND ARTISTIC BENEFITS OF DANCE. WE PRODUCE A WIDE RANGE OF INSPIRATIONAL PROJECTS AND EVENTS TO ENGAGE OUR DIVERSE LOCAL COMMUNITIES OF ALL AGES IN DANCE, AND NURTURE THE NEXT GENERATION OF PROFESSIONAL ARTISTS AND PRODUCERS. WE CHAMPION ENTERPRISE, COLLABORATION AND INNOVATION IN ORDER TO CREATE, COMMISSION AND STAGE DANCE OF EXCEPTIONAL QUALITY THAT IS SEEN REGIONALLY, NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY.

THE FI.ELD

THE FI.ELD (FUTURE INNOVATORS. EAST LONDON DANCE) IS A FREE, HANDS-ON PROGRAMME THAT EQUIPS YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 16-30 WITH THE SKILLS, RESOURCES AND KNOWLEDGE TO FURTHER THEIR CAREER IN THE CREATIVE ARTS AND DANCE SECTOR.

The Fi.ELD 2020 COHORT

LUCINE MICHELLE MUTULEASA
Festival producers

KIM CHI LE TILLIE RIDGE
HATTIE HARDING XINYUE ZHANG
Marketing team

PHILLY RULE EMILY ADAMS
ADINA DUMITRASCU
Budget team

ANNA DIGERO KAJSA SUNDSTRÖM
ALISON THOMAS
Artists, Partnerships & Programming team

MESA

MESA FESTIVAL IS CREATED, CURATED AND PRODUCED BY THE FI.ELD, A UNIQUE PROGRAMME FROM EAST LONDON DANCE TO DEVELOP THE FUTURE INNOVATORS OF DANCE, EQUIPPING THEM WITH SKILLS AND RESOURCES TO MAKE THEIR IDEAS HAPPEN.

MESA FESTIVAL, IS AN INTERACTIVE, MULTI-ARTS FESTIVAL EXPLORING THE CONCEPT OF FAMILY. TAKING PLACE, ONLINE FROM 19-25 OCTOBER, THE AIM IS TO FIND INTERACTIVE WAYS TO TAP INTO EAST LONDON'S CREATIVE COMMUNITY AND BEYOND.

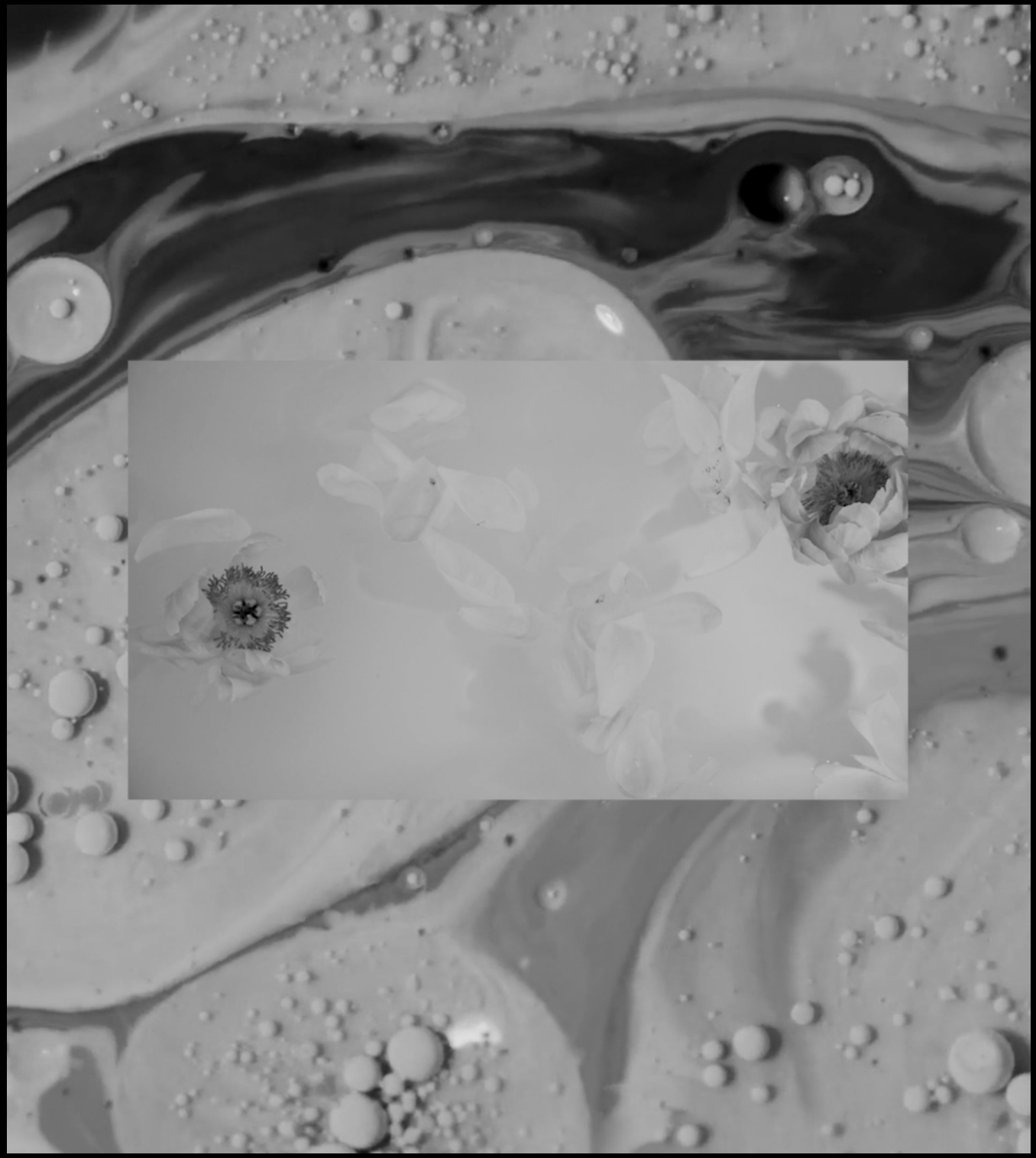
MESA FESTIVAL WILL SHOWCASE YOUNG CREATIVES, ELEVATE UNDERREPRESENTED VOICES AND PROVIDE A SEAT AT THE TABLE FOR ALL. WE'VE GOT FIVE INCREDIBLE EVENTS TAKING PLACE ACROSS SEVEN DAYS – CELEBRATING THE CONCEPT OF FAMILY THROUGH A SERIES OF ONLINE WORKSHOPS, DISCUSSIONS, SCREENINGS AND AUDIO-VISUAL INSTALLATIONS AND A REAL WORLD GUIDED TRAIL.

THE ENTRANCE

The entrance is the beginning of your journey into the realms of Family.

This spoken word piece by producer L U C I N E is written taking note of colourism and favour towards a certain kind of people. How this can inhibit love and decrease your sense of Family.
It speaks on the identity of one who is more likely to be loved and one who is less likely to be loved. Interweaving the issues of colourism and of self. Would skin colour make you love someone more or less? Maybe it's not even your decision to make, but the decision of the unconscious bias of the mind...

Some of us may not even realise it but there can be a criteria for who we love, spend time with, open up to and rightly so, it's a way of protecting ourselves. But in some cases it does more harm than good. To hold criteria and use it in a way to decide that another human doesn't deserve love can mean that they miss out on something we are all entitled to, something that only some of us are fortunate to experience in its truest form.



THE FAMILY DINNER

Food has brought people together for centuries.
As humans we need to eat, though what we eat and who we eat with is forever changing.

Food is also known for both uniting and in some cases dividing Family. A staple and tradition in many households, it takes on many forms, from the Sunday roast, to takeaway nights and Christmas dinner.
In some instances the food isn't even the star of the show. It may be the arguments, the raucous laughter or the humble game, which starts off friendly but soon brings out the competitive nature in all the players.

The soundscape is reflective of a busy restaurant environment, something we are probably all missing given the global situation. A taster of what was once 'normal'. A moment in time when groups be it Family or otherwise would simultaneously congregate using food as the medium.

Before tucking into dinner you will hear the reflective thoughts of one of our submitters, Sointu Saraste, speaking on how lockdown changed her Family dynamics and what that now means for her.

THE SILENT ROOM

Silence is a powerful thing.

After all the sweet melodies of the soundscape we take you to silence. We help you tread carefully into the darker, less popular side of Family.

Here we give you the chance to consider both the positive and negative in your own Family. How Family consistently bounces between the good and the bad, the highs and the lows and that this is neither in itself good or bad.

It is merely a reminder that nothing is perfect. That the 'happy Family' like the 'happy individual' also sees some less happy times. It's much less about the amount of good and bad and more so about the acknowledgement that the two coexist and it is how we exist with it that can affect our experiences of Family.

THE SUBMISSIONS

« Far Away »

Created by Tourdille x KRZ

<u>Description</u>: My piece is a form of spoken word mixed with music. When I first read about the festival and its theme, I was instantly brought back to my own experience and childhood. I chose a production that reflected a melancholy, perhaps even sadness to the audience as a landscape of sound. The words were the first ones to appear in mind. Being out of my family "home" at the age of 17 without looking back to escape from (TRIGGER WARNING) physical and mental abuse from my "father" made me think about what a "home" really means. A place to sleep? A place to grow? A safe space? In this piece, I take the last option as my only way of surviving and let my "father" appear as a ghost, only referring to his car at the entrance of the building to mark his presence and the fear it brought me and my family. This melody and those words are essentially an attempt to grieve and accept that my home will never be the one people thought it should, and that I took control over it to create my own.

"Family is a trap."

« Family is a trap » sums up my feelings around it. I always felt, and even more with the current political situation, that we have a need to desacralize this concept. It is a concept, for me. I've seen in queer spaces new ways of perceiving family : no need to be related by blood, but by a love and a desire to do good to our people. Being part of Blood + Water gave me the opportunity, through « Far Away » to express the fact that a lot of us go through abuse in those families that are praised « a mum and a dad », and that we wish to run away from it. It gave me the space to tell other people in my situation, and there's a lot of us, that we are not alone.

(TRIGGER WARNING)

From good to bad, beautiful to ugly. Family in all it's glory and unglory.
This section was created to highlight that Family isn't the same for us all.

Family images flash in and out beginning with images of the positive, good life, what often represents Family accompanied by facts that highlight how Family exists in the UK in a positive way. Soon the images transition to the side we don't often see or even hear about. The images flash in with facts that highlight the hurt Family can bring, the negatives are put into perspective.

The soundscape attempts to portray the emptiness, loneliness, confusion and hurt of the more negative experience of Family. Feelings only emphasised by our submitter, Tourdilles's piece "Far Away".

To reiterate that the bonds we choose to forge, blood relative or otherwise are often stronger and far more meaningful.

TOURDILLE

INSTAGRAM

I'M A 22 YEARS-OLD FRENCH, MOROCCAN AND ALGERIAN SELF-TAUGHT ARTIST. I WAS ALWAYS DEDICATED TO ARTS, AND SPECIFICALLY MUSIC. IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN A WAY FOR ME TO COMMUNICATE, LET GO, OR PUT WORDS ON FEELINGS I COULDN'T EXPLAIN ON MY OWN. SAYING IT IS THERAPEUTIC WOULD BE AN EMPHASIS, BUT IT DEFINITELY PLAYS A ROLE IN MY GROWTH AS A PERSON. MY ART IS BASED ON MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCES, ENGRAINED IN MY POLITICAL VIEWS, FEARS, AND DESIRES. THROUGH MY PRACTICE, I WISH TO CREATE THE SPACE I ALWAYS WANTED TO HAVE THROUGH DIFFICULT TIMES : ONE IN WHICH NO ONE FEELS LONELY, AND ALL FEEL SAFE AND HEARD.

KRZ

INSTAGRAM

I GO BY THE NAME OF KRZ, A 22-YEAR-OLD PRODUCER, BORN IN CASABLANCA. I WAS IMMERSED IN SOUL, R & B, AND HIP-HOP MUSIC FROM AN EARLY AGE. INSTRUMENTAL PRODUCTION IS THE ONLY WAY FOR ME TO EXPERIENCE THE PRESENT MOMENT.

GRAVE DANGER

Created by Weyland McKenzie & Reuben Arthur

Description: It is said that in this life, nothing is certain – save for death & taxes. In this short episode of The Green Room Press, Reuben Arthur (Team GB athlete and Commonwealth Gold winner) peels back the layers and reflects on the lessons he learned from his father's death as well as the recent passing of NBA legend Kobe Bryant (Produced by Weyland Mckenzie).

"Family is everything."

Family is an ever-changing organism in my eyes. In some ways, families are much like us as humans ourselves; what starts off as a single unit goes through various divisions, only to become bigger and stronger as a result. New additions arise & are subsequently replaced by those more suited to our needs. Over time, I've grown to accept that family isn't something you're born into. It's something you create, with precision and patience, every day for the rest of your life. I think that's my main takeaway from being a part of the Blood + Water experience; the people I spoke with all agreed that genetics does not a family member make. Blood may be thicker than Water, but it is Water that flows with grace, brings buoyancy to our lives & adapts to the harshest of days and the coldest of nights. Isn't that what family should do?

REUBEN ARTHUR

INSTAGRAM | TWITTER

REUBEN ARTHUR IS A MULTI-FACETED INDIVIDUAL – A WORLD-BEATING ATHLETE BY DAY, & EVERYTHING ELSE BY NIGHT! WHILE HE'S MOST NOTABLE FOR BEING THE LEAD OFF LEG FOR THE WINNING ENGLISH 4X100M QUARTET AT THE COMMONWEALTH GAMES IN GOLD COAST, AUSTRALIA, HE'S ALSO KNOWN TO HOST (WITH THE MOST) – AS ONE HALF OF AUDIO EDITORIAL NEWSPAPER THE GREEN ROOM PRESS AND AS ONE THIRD OF THE NARRATIVE PODCAST, WHICH AIMS TO CHALLENGE THE STATUS QUO OF TRACK AND FIELD.

WEYLAND MCKENZIE

INSTAGRAM | TWITTER

WEYLAND MCKENZIE IS A 23 YEAR OLD AUDIO ARTIST – BORN AND RAISED IN STOKE NEWINGTON, LONDON. WEYLAND'S WORK INCLUDES RADIO/PODCAST PRODUCTION(TRANSMISSION ROUNDHOUSE, BBC SOUNDS) , DJ'ING AND CREATING MUSIC.

ME, A JOURNEY

Created by Sointu Saraste

Description: When being in lockdown, I spent a lot of time with my family, but started paradoxically feel more distant to them. In my audio, I explain these thoughts and in my video I share my feelings and how I feel that I'm on a journey away from home and from family and going into more independent being and finding new things of myself. The notions of homesickness and longing are also present. It's never easy to leave something behind and to change direction.

"Family is a group of people bound by blood or by love."

I have been thinking of family quite a lot recently, because I spent the whole lockdown in my family's house. It was a great, but also challenging 6 months.
I consider in my work the act of leaving my family and getting independence from it.

SOINTU SARASTE

INSTAGRAM

I AM A FINNISH DANCE ARTIST CURRENTLY IN MY LAST YEAR OF BA (HONS) CONTEMPORARY DANCE AT TRINITY LABAN CONSERVATOIRE OF MUSIC AND DANCE. AT THE MOMENT, I AM INTERESTED IN MAKING SITE-SPECIFIC WORK AND THEMES THAT INTEREST ME ARE PHYSICAL WORK, REPETITIVE PATTERNS, BOREDOM AS A RESPONSE TO URBAN ENVIRONMENT AND BUSY LIFESTYLE. I AM A VERY CURIOUS PERSON. I ENJOY EXPLORING BY TRAVELING TO DIFFERENT COUNTRIES, BUT ALSO, EXPLORING LOCALLY BY CYCLING OR WALKING. ONE OF MY WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS IS TO DO MY FOOD SHOPPING. ESPECIALLY IN THE MARKET, ONE CAN FIND ANYTHING.

A PORTAL THAT IS THE TIME WE HAVE SHARED

Created by Saffron Mustafa and Renée Bellamy

Description: This film concludes a thoughtful process stemming from the desire to investigate ways of working together to build a space to move and connect within. The idea of building alternative spaces feels particularly compelling and transformative in a moment when many of our notions of community, distance, proximity and ways of being and moving together have shifted so much. For us it has been important to reshape our modes of connection, to find ways to make time and hold space for each other, and to prioritise care, joy and resilience.

Our process has led to conversation, mark making and movement as a means of articulating the qualities of a collective, imagined space. Collaborating with members of the Next Choreography cohort, we drew upon text, sound and other prompts from which our choreography arose. Connecting with a small group within Next Choreography for this piece expanded our sense of belonging within the wider cohort. Both audio and visual are informed by our conversations as a group illustrating some of our process, the space built from the collaborative workshop, a portal to the spaceand time we shared.

"Family is connection, kinship, belonging, a sense of home."

Throughout our collaborative process we have considered how to create safe spaces together in a playful way. We often come back to the idea of cooking together – as a way to think about gathering different materials or ingredients, bringing different elements to the table. This connection between making and building shared spaces together with chosen or otherwise family, is what drew us to being part of Blood + Water.

SAFFRON MUSTAFA

INSTAGRAM

SAFFRON IS CURRENTLY STUDYING CITY PLANNING AT UCL ARRIVING HERE FROM A FINE ART BACKGROUND. OVER THE PAST YEAR SAFFRON HAS BEEN INVESTED IN EXPLORING MODES OF COLLABORATIVE MAKING AND CHOREOGRAPHY AS A FRAMEWORK TO EXPLORE WAYS TO THINK ABOUT SPACE.

RENÉE BELLAMY

INSTAGRAM | WEBSITE

RENÉE IS AN INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTIST FROM SOUTH EAST LONDON. USING HER BACKGROUND IN FILMMAKING, DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY, VISUAL ARTS AND DANCE TO INFORM HER ARTISTIC PRACTICE, RENÉE'S WORK IS AN ONGOING INVESTIGATION INTO EXPRESSING THE MANY REALITIES OF THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE.

MOTHERLESS CHILD

Created by Outlaw Ali

Description: I come from chaos. Motherless Child is me releasing a lot of anger that was inside of me as a result of the war zone I was raised in. It's angry but honest, dark yet hopeful.

"Family is like a cigarette.
Family is like the heart. Without it, the body would find it hard to function."

Blood + Water is an important project because it opens up the dialogue about what a conventional family is, and in doing so, will hopefully show people that there is no such thing as a conventional family. The norm is that there is no norm... This experience was easy for me because those who helped produce the project have been very involved, and more so than that, they helped build a safe space for an honest conversation.

OUTLAW ALI

INSTAGRAM | FACEBOOK | TWITTER

MY NAME IS OUTLAW ALI. MY PASSION IS PEOPLE AND MY PURPOSE IS MUSIC. THE MUSIC I MAKE FUSES OLD SCHOOL GANGSTER RAP WITH MODERN SOUNDS AND MESSAGES, TAKING THE PAST AND RIDING INTO THE FUTURE...

LETS TALK ABOUT PARENTS.

Created by Sana El-Wakili

Description: Documentation and expression of through the mess of life its my family who keep me strong. Who support me through my ups and my downs. I always return to them.

"Family is a tight string holding you where ever you go."

For me family is home whatever makes you feel like your home. My art is my family. My close people are my family. But also my mum and dad I learnt a real truth in life that they always got me are who you always come back to for moral, emotional support they have got us in thick and thin and i realised this in my weakest and strongest. Without family its overwhelmingly tough to keep strong in an oppressive world. But family means different things to different people. It doesn't have to be mum and dad. Orphans don't have mum and dad but they have something that keeps them going. Friends can be family. All loved ones are family. Its not about it being family in the traditional sense. It about a sense of comfort belonging and safety and strength.

SANA EL-WAKILI

INSTAGRAM | VIMEO

SANA IS AN ACTOR, DANCER, CHOREOGRAPHER, CIRCUS ARTIST, POET/WRITER. TO PUT IT INTO ONE TERM...AN ARTIST! SHE LOVES TO EXPRESS HER ART IN HER AUTHENTIC ORIGINAL STYLE WHICH IS POETIC, WITH A LOVE OF RHYTHM & FUSION OF THEATRICALITY. SHE IS KNOWN TO CREATE RAW, HONEST CONTENT. SHE IS VERY HONEST WITH HERSELF AND HER ART. SHE IS ALWAYS ON THE HUNT FOR POWERFUL ART THAT GETS YOU TO THINK AND INTERROGATE THE WORLD AND THE CHALLENGES THAT COMES WITH BEING HUMAN. SHE IS CURRENTLY MAKING SOME DANCE FILMS FOR DIFFERENT PROJECTS AND PRODUCING HER OWN WORK.

THE FAMILY ROOM

The Family tree is meant to represent Family relationships.
A tree allows us to grow as one, unified, intertwined...

From the dark we now bring you into the light.

Here you can take a moment for Family or self reflection.
We explore how nature not only tells us a lot about Family, but also has the ability to influence what we think and feel about Family. How nature affects us and why. How it shows us the way to interact not only with nature itself but with humans who are creatures of nature.

Family is often described as a behaviour, an act. In exhibiting this behaviour, in acting Family out we become one. We become a singular organism whether functional or dysfunctional, all with our own individual parts, individual purpose, together as one.

THE EXIT

Here we provide you with an explosion of colour to help soothe your senses before leaving this installation journey.

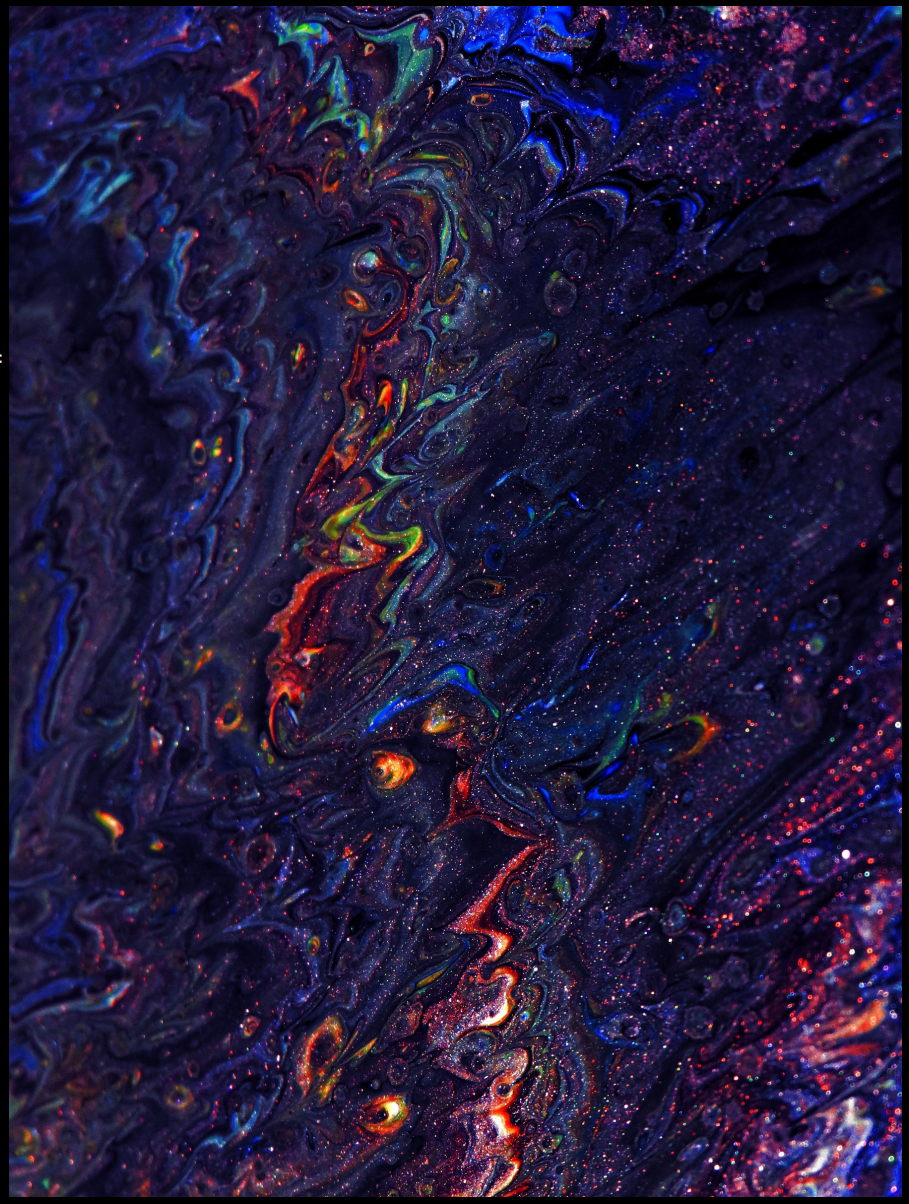
Hopefully it has been an unexpected, thought provoking ride.

Producers L U C I N E and Kim Chi both elude to their own thoughts and ideas of Family matched by the homely sounds of the soundscape helping to bring the installation to a comforting end.

You're also given the opportunity to gift a love one, to pay it forward and express gratitude and love for any Family relationships you hold dearly, in the form of something handmade that you can personalise.

Did you learn something new? Did you relearn about yourself and your own ideas of Family? Have you developed a new perspective?

However you feel, whatever you enjoyed or didn't enjoy we would love to hear your thoughts.
Share your experience with us using the hashtag #bloodandwater



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Blood + Water is part of a wider festival called MESA.
It has been almost 6 months in the making!

We have various events running through the week including the release of our Blood + Water podcast miniseries which too seeks to challenge the traditional idea of Family by attempting to answer the three central questions to Blood + Water: "What is Family?", "Why is Family important?" and "Can you live without Family?"

Click our timetable for more information and tickets.