

INTRO

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Jess Brough: Welcome to Before the Applause - an audio programme for hybrid arts festival Fringe of Colour Films. We are going to be hearing from the filmmakers and artists who are behind the films in this year's festival programme. Some of these films will make you laugh, many will challenge you, and others will be thoroughly dismantling in their ability to find their way straight to your heart. Please enjoy hearing from the people behind these remarkable films and this continuation of their stories.

DIALOGUE

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Jaha Browne: I'm Jaha Browne. I am the co-director of We Are Nature. Yeah, so myself and Liv, we really wanted to create an audio-driven documentary, really wanted to capture sound. So we live in a very busy world and things are very like wanting to grab your attention all the time. And so we just wanted to create a beautiful piece where people actually listened. That was our intention. We wanted people to listen to this topic, to listen to these voices. And so therefore we started off with the audio recordings and we created this beautiful sound competition and sound design, which basically draws you in. So it's more about listening and we ask you to listen and take you on that journey. So as much as it's about the visuals, we really just wanted people to absorb the words and hear the voices of the women. The women in the film are Sabah Hamid, who's a mountain leader and co-founder of Summit Special and her husband, sorry, [inaudible] Heights for People of Colour. They're based near Birmingham. And then we have Sabrina Pace-Humphreys, who's based in the Cotswolds. She's the co-founder of Black Trail Runners. They're the first UK charity with a mission to increase inclusion, participation, representation for black runners, which is absolutely awesome. And then we have Sherelle Harding who's the founder of Steppers, supporting people of colour and communities to build positive relationships in nature. And then we have Mary-Anne Ockerturr who's a broadcaster and author and she's written books about British archaeology and the landscape. So it was really interesting talking to Mary-Anne because she was like talking about the whole idea of, you know, the British landscape belonging to a certain type of person, but actually it's like the invasions, the immigrations through time, it belongs to everybody. It's not just what. So that was really interesting to learn about the landscape of the UK. And then we have Charisse, who's the founder of Create Conscious Community, making spirituality more accessible in nature for people in the BIPOC community. So yeah, they're our amazing five women.

FILM CLIP: 0:02:57

It's imperative that we reconnect to that source because so much history, so much wisdom and ancestral sort of teachings lie in those spaces that we cannot connect to in the city. And you have to, you just have to go there. You have to sit with a tree, you have to sit in a forest. And then the things, the teachings, it will come through. They'll speak to you. And you'll understand how to listen to it because it's not communicated through language or words. So different kind of communication and we can all resonate with that.

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Me and Liv, so we was looking originally about the yoga industry and how the cultural appropriation in the yoga industry and things wasn't really aligning and then this opportunity with Kendal Mountain Festival and [inaudible] came up where they were giving out a funding. So we were like, actually, let's turn the lens on to nature. And then we discovered that less than 1% of people from POC communities don't go out into nature, into the national parks. And we were like, oh my God, this is shocking. And so therefore, we found some amazing women, UK-based women, who are changing the narrative, who are encouraging the communities, our communities, to come back into nature, to reconnect back to like basically our ancestral roots and like our birthright basically. So that was the calling for We Are Nature, it was we just turned the lens into the outdoors world and it's more about the outdoors because we know again like we've had some conflicts with people and it's like it's not we're saying nature has these barriers. Of course nature is one, we're all part of nature but it's the outdoor industry, it's the the setups and the places that are not accessible for people and doesn't allow people to feel like they can be in those spaces. So that's what the film's about and these women are working within the industry changing that narrative. The team of sound designers were and composer, we had sound designer Corinne, and then we had sound composer Holly, and then we had Nandi, he's a beautiful singer and artist, and basically those three worked some magic. I was really inspired by, well we was really inspired by the Beautiful Chorus. I don't know if you know who they are, but they're an amazing meditative collective in the US and their music is just really beautiful. I say anyone to go just go on Spotify and listen to their music, it's very meditative. And we just wanted to create those nature deep rustling sounds and for the audio to be a bit, sometimes a bit louder than the voices, but not in terms of taking away, but just in terms of creating that emotion and that feeling to amplify. So we did the audio recordings and then Corrine came in with different sounds and then Holly composed the music and then Nandi just did this. We didn't want like voice, we just wanted like toning and she just delivered on that. So yeah, it was magical. For me, when Charisse talks about reconnecting back to source and the ancestral teachings of nature, I really resonate to that and I believe all of us can tap into that space. And whether it's with our plants indoors, whether it's outside, like we can connect to nature in different spaces. Yes, ultimately going to the countryside and all these magical places are great, but we, you know, nature's within. I think that's really important for us to start reconnecting back with. Yeah, I just really hope this film just inspires people or just gives people a time out, just like a time out as well from the busy world, just to digest something quite potent in that. And also, Sherelle when she talked about joy is my resistance and I think yeah there's just something really beautiful about that and you know resistance doesn't always have to be so heavy and so harsh and that's required at times because that shifts things but ultimately I think as communities we need to bring in that joy and that softness more and I'm seeing that across the board, I don't know about you, but just seeing people really just saying no and just being like, I'm gonna use my joy. So yeah, I think they're the things that I really love about the film and the messaging behind that.

OUTRO

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Jess Brough: Fringe of Colour Films 2023 takes place from the 23rd to the 29th June, but this audio programme will be available in perpetuity. If you are listening to this before the festival, we hope you can join us either online or in-person in Edinburgh, and if you are listening after the festival, you can stay up-to-date with our work at fringeofcolour.co.uk. This podcast was brought to you by Fringe of Colour Films, a hybrid arts festival for Black people and People of Colour. This series is presented by me Jess Brough, produced by Halina Rifai and Fringe of Colour, theme music by Xavier LaCroix and is supported by Creative Scotland. Thank you for listening.