

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. In this episode, we are going to hear about the film Fountain, a Yewande 103 production with concept, creative direction and choreography by Alexandrina Hemsley.

DIALOGUE

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Rudzani Moleya: Hello, my name is Rotani Molaie and I am one of the dance artists in Fountain.

Rickay Hewitt-Martin: I'm Rikey Hughart-Martin and I am a dancer in the film.

RM: So I think the water appears at the start of the image and it's sort of droplets that are landing into a body of water. You're not too sure of how expansive the water is. Is it a sea of water? Is it a cup of water? But there is the sense of largeness and then you see hands, you see fingers and rocking. And also like spilling, that kind of pouring and spilling in and out of the film. The creation process for the film was very collaborative from the start. When we were working with Alexandrina, they had set out scores which we were encouraged to respond to. And the original fountain has four stages, states that we sort of worked through and there was still a lot of space for improvisation. So if you found something that was exciting to you or felt like you really wanted to explore it more, you were invited to do that.

RHM: Yeah, it was really guiding the experience and the process, and it was anchoring for me. So the beginning one for me was giving and receiving and sensing and warming up. That's the feeling. And the shoreline was a big thing for us, wasn't it? Returning from the beginning and our fingertips as well. It's really nice. And then it kind of went into, for me, because I guess each one is different for us both. The second state was more the unravelling, letting go and releasing and stretching and expanding. And I think the other one was glow and then flight. And that was one with many faces and the echoing.

RM: Yeah, the first state for me, the idea of rocking. Remember the image of having like water being called to the ocean. It's almost, you know that you are a part of the ocean and for some reason you've been separated or you've been detached from it and the ocean is calling you back. So they're rocking motion. And then the second state for me was also sort of unravelling, unravelling in a way to accept the journey, you have a call and then you're like, okay, I've chosen to respond. So they're unravelling. And then for the glowing state, we were very much encouraged to think about it from like a somatic point of view. So it was, you started off quite small and then your whole body was glowing and it was radiating. And we worked with the concept of a hammock, like how slowly descend and then come back up.

And then the flight was reading each other's backs, being able to interpret information that you're receiving using your own language.

RHM: So I feel like we fed off each other. So when the song was moving, they would be, you know, doing something and I'd be like, oh my gosh, yeah, that might have also connected with that also. So yeah, for me, it was really like, like sharing.

RM: I resonate with that. A lot of us really use each others as soundboards or things to sort of work from, places to work from. And especially in the flight where we were reading each other's backs, but also the other pieces of the film, because there's a felt sense in this piece. It's like I could have my eyes closed, but sense exactly where Rickay is. So it's, yeah, there was a connection that went beyond just being able to see each other in the space. You could really energetically be able to feel where someone was. And sometimes, I remember this happening in the process where I would allow the energy that I was feeling to drive my story. And I remember us having a collective conversation about that and Alexandrine really encouraging us to stay with where we are. It's okay to resonate or see or feel someone else's energy. You should allow that energy to drive you. And I think for me, that was one of the most challenging things to not be swept away by what it is that I was feeling.

RHM: I think for me it was very challenging at times. I've never had that type of experience before with a camera, so close up. But I feel like the camera team were really supportive in the sense that they, almost sometimes they would not hide, but the way they moved with us in the space really like supported us, or like the process, they weren't always like straight on. They like moved with us, so they were kind of on this wave and journey. There was like a flow with it. I think, yeah, at the beginning I was just thinking it's just going to be like very like direct and head-on. It wasn't like that at all. The sound score is like different for each section, it's very energetic, there's a like a punch to it but there's also similarities in sounds I feel like throughout the score. They're all like interlinks with one another.

RM: Yeah, the music in Fountain is absolutely beautiful. I remember us as the creative team hearing it for the first time and just being really blown away by how it captures how intimate it can be, how engaging. There's almost like a sense of urgency in the music.

RHM: There's a lot of layers, isn't there?

RM: It's beautiful.

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.