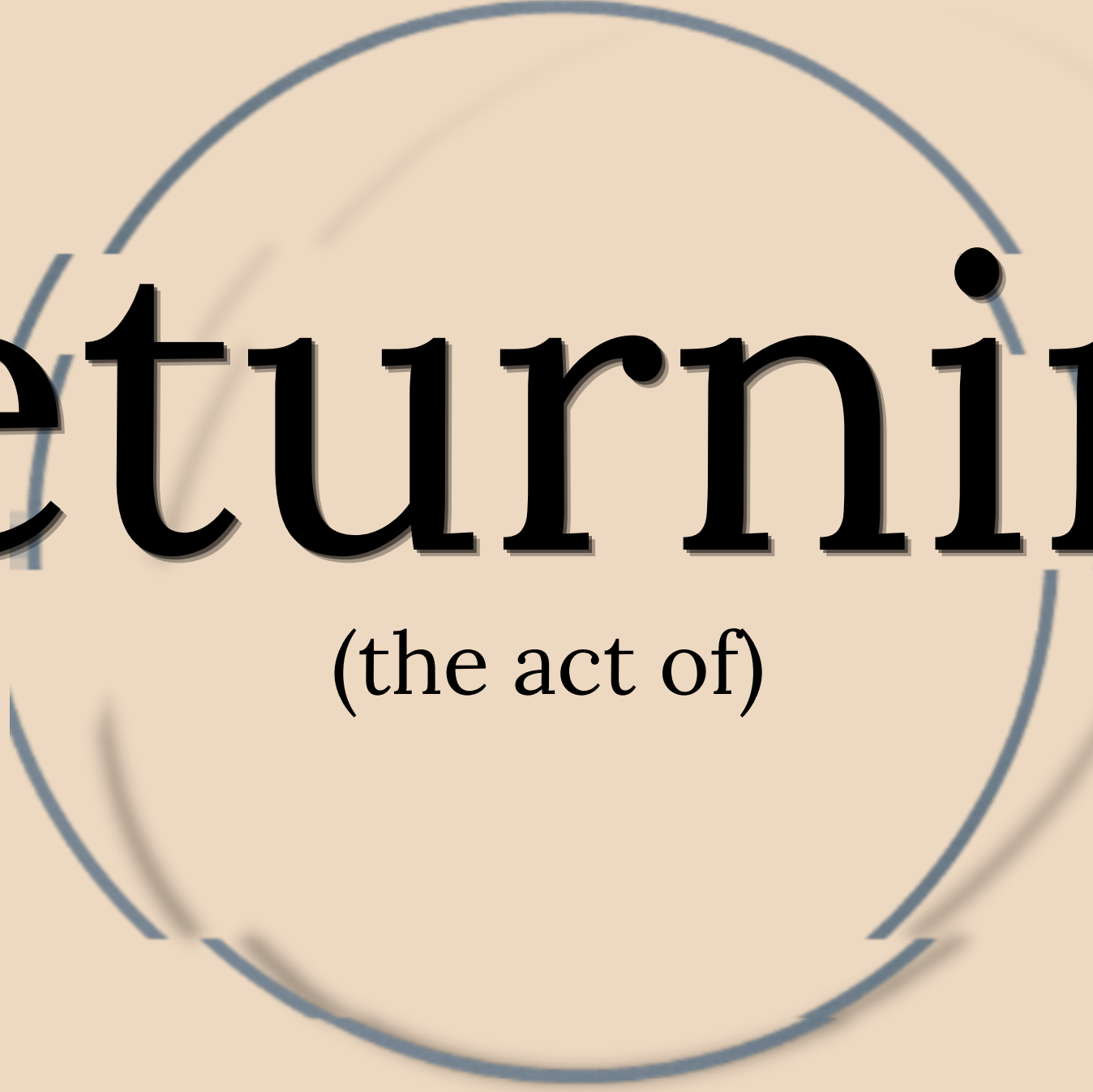


**FALSE
START
PRODUCTIONS**

PRESENT



returning

(the act of)

AUGUST 2021

WWW.FALSE-START.COM

FALSE START
PRODUCTIONS

PRESENT

returning (the act of)

SEVENTEEN
ARTISTS,
WRITERS AND
PERFORMERS
HAVE BEEN
SELECTED
TO CREATE
WORK IN
RESPONSE
TO A SHORT
WRITTEN
SERIAL.

returning
(the act of)

A word from us...

As a partnership that champions collaboration, False Start wanted to create an opportunity for emerging artists to network and create work with one another. The result of this ambition is the digital serial you are about to experience.

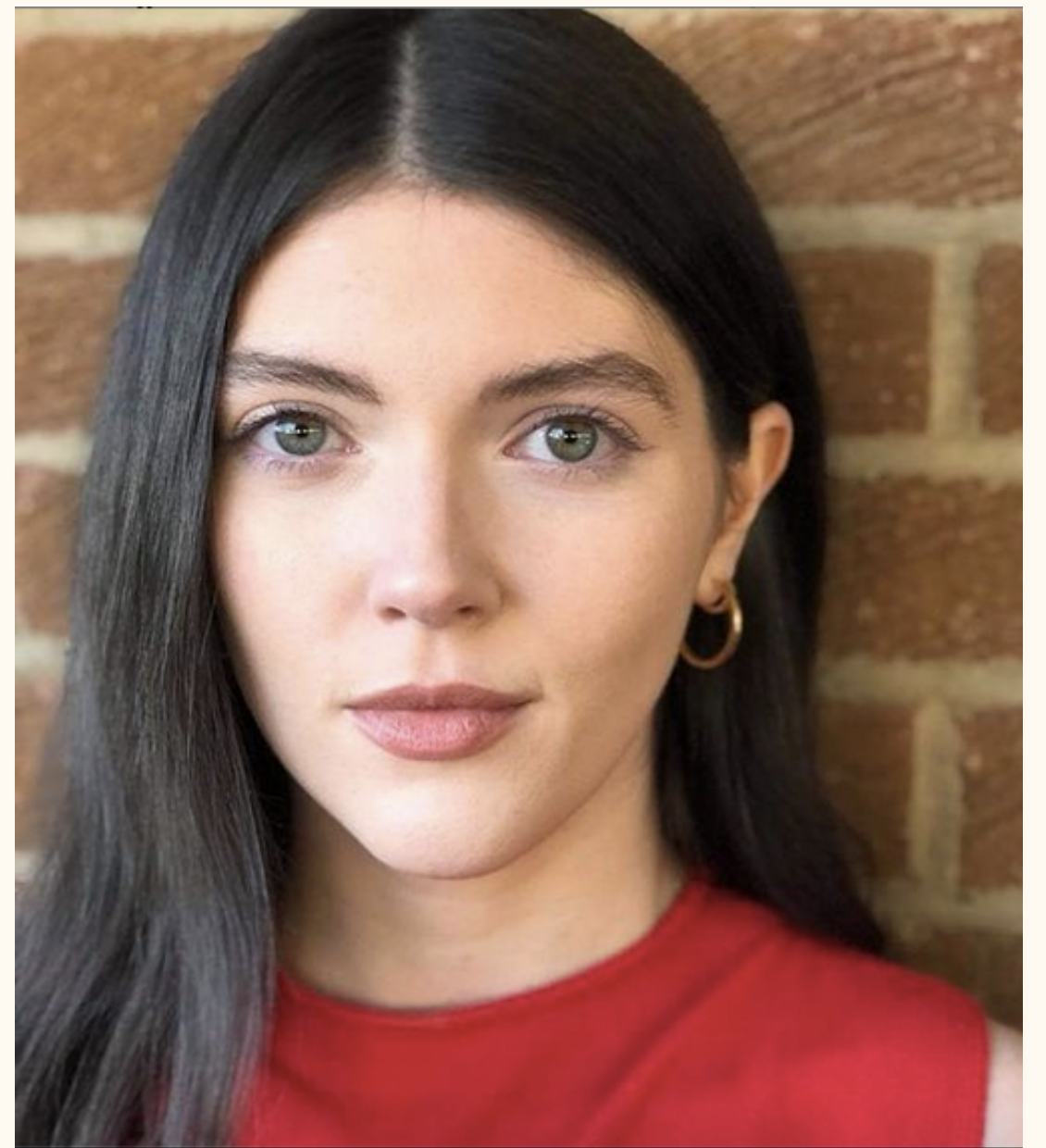
We were intrigued to see each artist's unique interpretation of their chapter. We wanted to create an act of varied, imaginative storytelling. The authorial voice of the chapters is met with the inflections of over seventeen artists, each bringing a new perspective.

False Start is committed to challenging storytelling and theatrical forms and is proud to have connected and supported new artists. We hope to continue providing opportunities for collaborators to produce original, exciting work.

The original iteration was comprised of nine episodes released across two weeks, accompanied by their written chapters. This zine is the full collection all in one place.

Enjoy!

Marnie and Jen



JENNIFER GALT
CO FOUNDER



MARNIE RUSSELL
CO FOUNDER

EPISODE 1

VERGEE

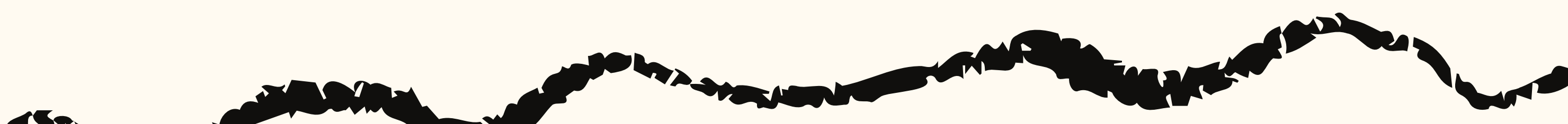
At the end of the tunnel is. It's difficult to describe. It's not quite the opposite of owning. It's different from belonging, from having something to hold. Different from being held. Not far from ache. It's loss, but it's a different type of loss. A loss I helped give away.

You move through the world at a quieter volume than before, but if I focus, I can feel the vibrations you send through the earth as you traverse it. I pull my ear off from the ground and rest on my forearms. I don't want to hear you right now. And I realise - I didn't choose this loss. It arrived one day, though neither of us wanted to look at it plainly.

It came with the wind. Door stretch. First chill. In through the creak. Skin dragged on bare wood underfoot, the closing of a day. Tired bones settling into the fold of home. Teetering sleepily on the verge of unawareness, a body not yet fully aware that its limbs, its organs, have accepted the shift slowly breaking around the walls both of us had pressed ourselves into.

It settled in after you left.

At the end of the tunnel, which I couldn't always see but knew was there, I found this. Another opening with a listless reception. A new end.



FALSE START PRODUCTIONS

A hushed, ruminative piece, "We Built A Home For Each Other" is a short film illustrating the quiet contemplation people feel at the end of a relationship.

Scott Afton articulates the every-day instances of a life shared between two people in a succinct, sensitive monologue. Calum Shiel's delicate direction pairs with performances from both Afton and Scottish actress Eleanor Crowe, culminating in a brief glimpse at intimacy through the lens of retrospect.

VIEW
HERE

WE BUILT A HOME FOR EACH OTHER

BY SCOTT AFTON



WITH
CALUM SHIELS
AND
ELEANOR CROWNE

WITH THANKS TO
JULIA HEGELE

EPISODE 2

DEW

The first time I hear your laugh in the folds of someone else's, I steel myself for the alarm that reverberates through me. It hits a soft pad in the burrow of my ear that I'd forgotten was there, and I can suddenly feel the light shift of your shirt against my arm. I'm at a bar with friends, some old, some new: people, it strikes me, that you'll never meet.

The lacquered wood table stretches out impossibly far in front of me and I go somewhere else, cataloguing every atom in the space between our skin as if I could name each one. A futile collection of the smallest moments you couldn't possibly remember in the same way. I repeat them until they become a steady, beating undercurrent that flutters beneath the surface, thumping the skin on my face from the inside until it flourishes pink. A friend notices under the glow of the overhead lamp and pricks my bubble, the swell of heat and noise rushing back in. The residue glimmers on the table.

I write. I remember I remember I remember I remember I remember I remember I remember I remember I remember I remember. In the wet rings printed carelessly on the wood, I look for the stretch of your arms, your stomach. Each shade that brushed through your skin. Candle waxed and glowy. Dewy and spit out your toothpaste. Marbled cold and slow and shallow breath, hidden below deck. Your ivy plant and your fingers in its soil.

I could pinpoint the notes of your laugh through an orchestra. My hand slips under the table and I try to tap out its rhythm in the creases of the grain, wondering who is sending me these slivers.

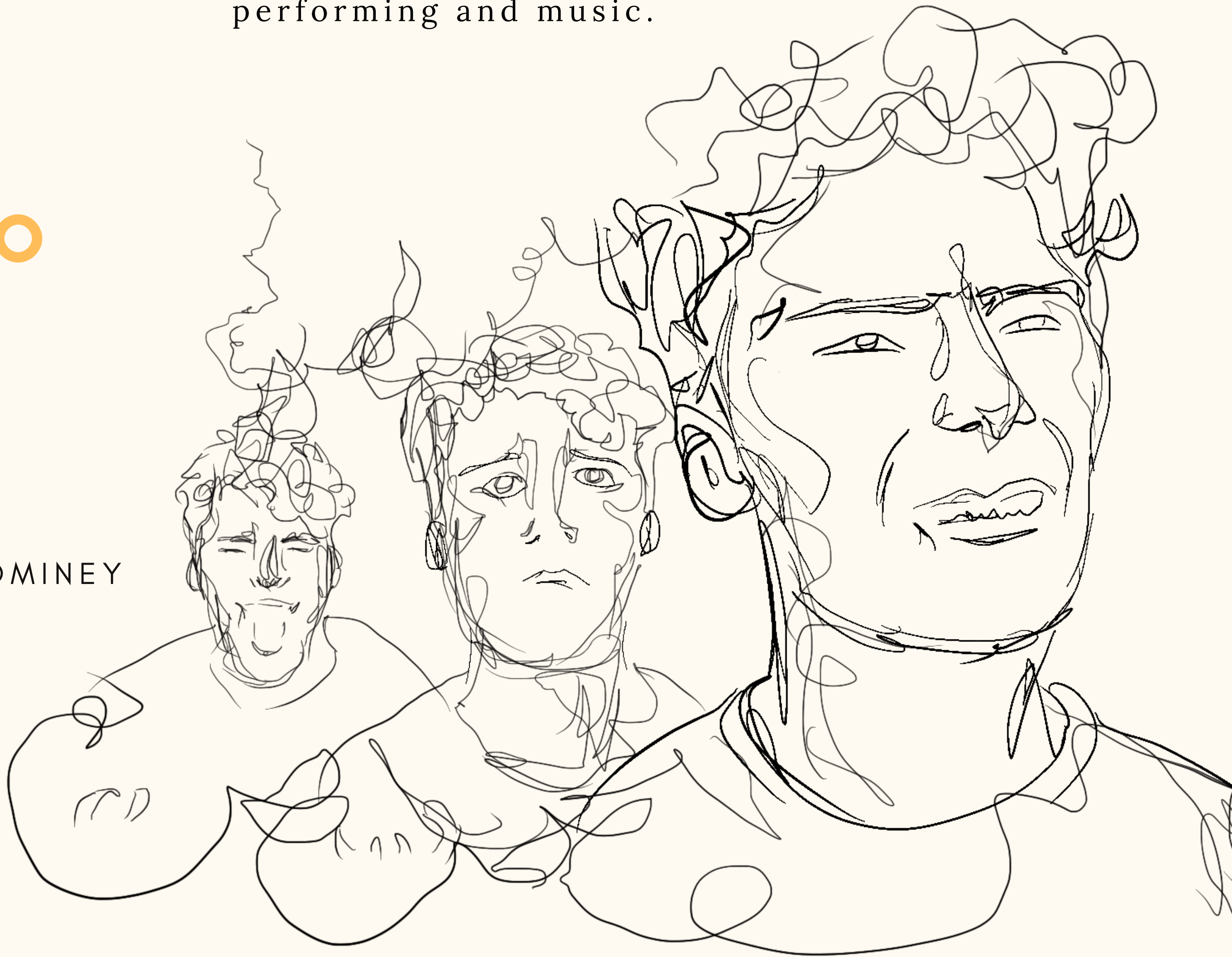


I write...I remember

A sense of longing pervades this collection of original writing, performing and music.

TALK TO YER BOYS

BY MICHAEL TOMINEY



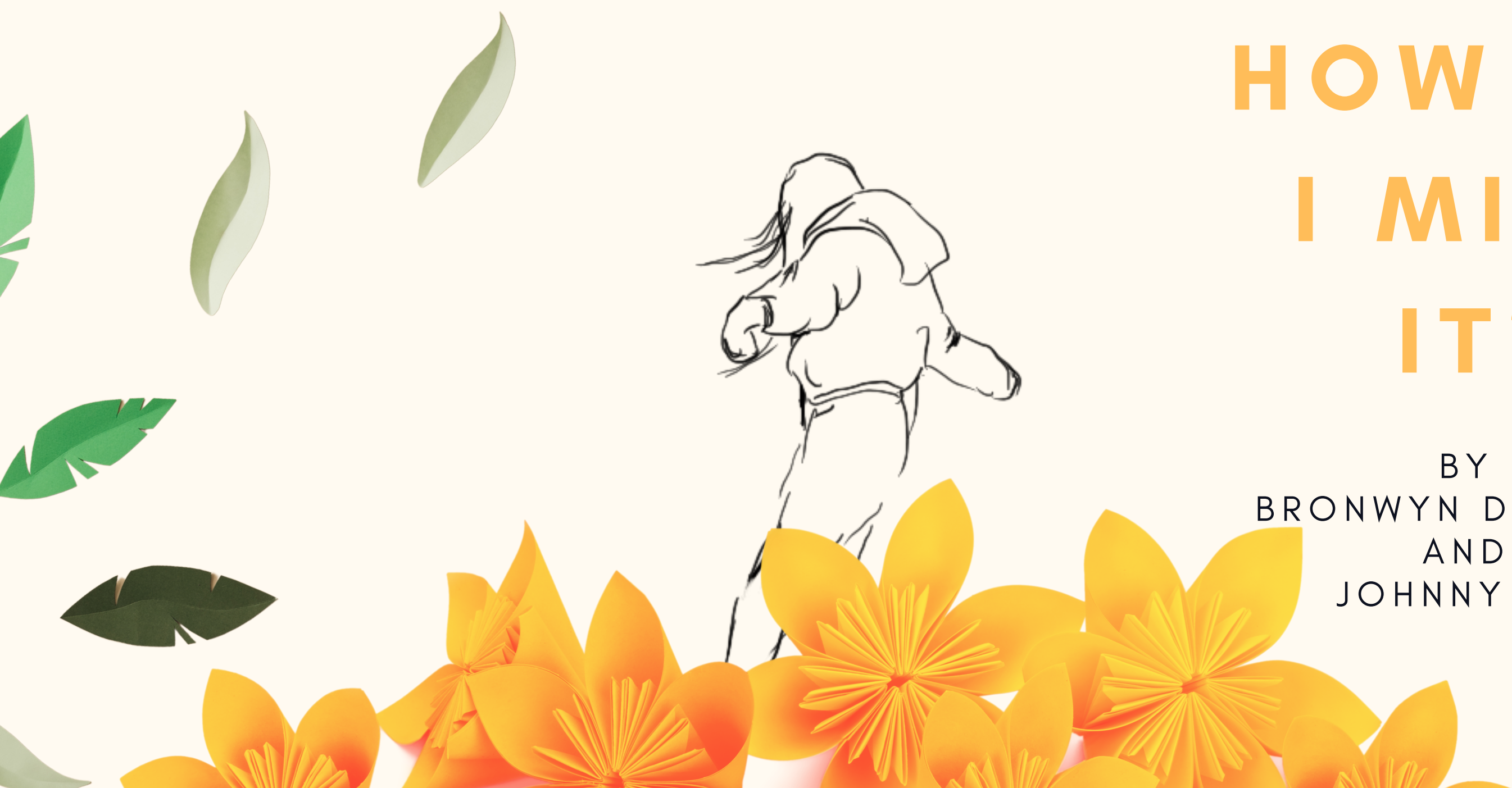
In “Talk To Yer Boys”, written and performed by Michael Tominey, the longing to be listened to and understood battles the frustrations of anxiety. The piece gives a moving, impassioned voice to the male experience of mental health issues.

Bronwyn Dickson’s piece “How Did I Miss It?” explores longing for a different reality with a person now relegated to the past. Johnny Orr’s original music accompanies Dickson’s monologue, heightening her contemplative performance with a tender nostalgia.

[VIEW
HERE](#)

HOW DID I MISS IT?

BY
BRONWYN DICKSON
AND
JOHNNY ORR



EPISODE 3

HUSH

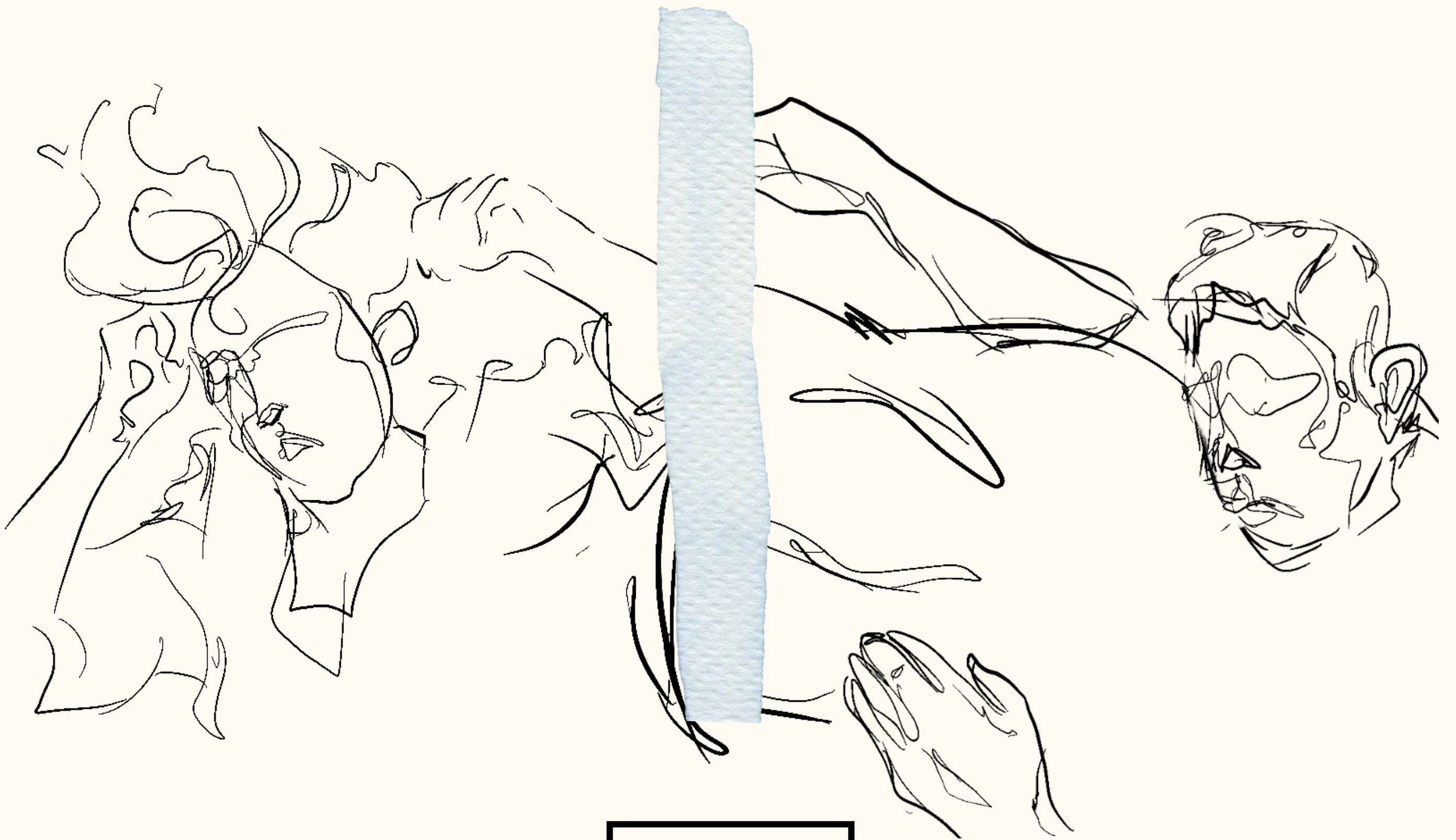
I start a new job and the routine suits me. My days become built around someone else's timetable and I slot in where I need to be.

Memories that dampened the corners feel dry to the touch, though the stains stare back. All breath and mixed perfumed skin and heat that once burned soles now lie cool. Underfoot. They don't rattle anymore. Prick at clenched toes and sting flushed, wound cheeks with salt, but the noise has hushed. They sit with me now, simply existing alongside me. In me. Quiet but unrelenting, the volume hums on low. Sometimes there is complete silence, and I live on a different planet where we never learnt each other's names.

There's a picture of a sailboat in National Geographic. It rests still and silent on a dog-eared page. I wonder if you ever started the boat you wanted to build and squint to see if you're hunched between the ropes. I think about tearing it from the spine and sending it to you in an unmarked envelope. Clue. But leading to what. It's docked in a quiet marina, lingering alone. My appointment isn't for another ten minutes and I unlock my phone and call. Someone. Can't remember. But I close the magazine and listen to the voice on the other end till I forget the colour of the hull.

JOE HUNTER AND ABBIE CRAIGMYLE

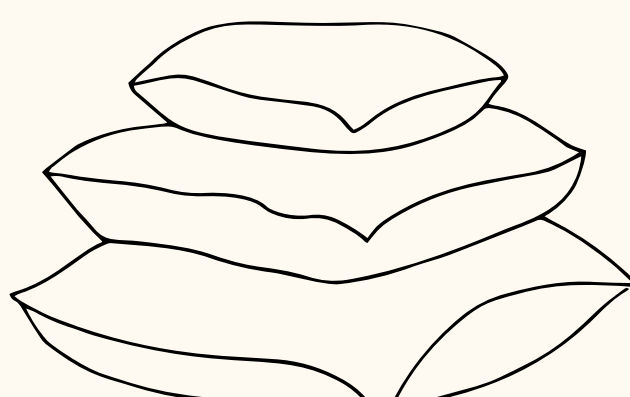
separate



[VIEW
HERE](#)

Joe Hunter and Abbie Craigmyle of Moot Point have created a thought-provoking short film in response to “HUSH”. Throughout “separate”, we watch “She” and “He” live alongside each other in separate worlds, their realities unravelling through the monotony of their day-to-day routines.

The naturalistic monologuing and domestic mise en scène are interspersed with short animations, underpinned by Hunter’s original score. The result is an inventive, intelligent piece of film-making.



EPISODE 4

HNAACK

The months have stacked up and the world around me is new. There are different smells and different faces and the newness never fails to surprise me. I breathe differently in new clothes that don't smell of. I circle around the transport system of a new city with the giddy novelty of a toy train set.

New people lie alongside me. Some stay longer than I expect them to, and over time I think I can love the hairs on the back of new necks and the rough hacks on new thumbs.

I'm not sure if time has healed me or simply stolen you away from me, as if I'll find you one day misplaced in an unpacked suitcase. I haven't dreamt of you in months, but in the greyest hours of one early morning, I wake up wanting to hear your laugh. I want to hear it splutter and the memory of it cracks so clearly I'm surprised the body that curls against me doesn't recoil. I think of things you'd find funny, things you'd hate. But I haven't dreamt of you in months.

I can still do the maths that pieces your face together in my head, but the focus shifts and dissolves quicker now. Blown-up. Each pixel generated in a gruelling process somewhere between admiration and obsession. There's no mystery of déjà vu; I understand that I'm working to uncover you in the back of my mind. I stop myself when I realise that if I make you up enough times in my head, you could inevitably turn into something new too.

The moments you enter my mind pass through without a stab of the dagger you carried to defend yourself. But pinpricks dot my body in your outline and bleed when I squeeze them. I'm here I'm here I'm here I'm here I'm here.

Leftovers

“Leftovers” is a collage-style short film that incorporates both original and archival footage.

This trio of creatives (formed organically by the False Start team) offer an insight into the often disjointed, frustrated relationship between the artists and the artistic process.

The idea of a project or artwork that was ‘left’, and searching for the drive to return to it, is explored through striking visuals that manage to retain an intimate tone. The narration fluctuates between monologuing, poetry and interview responses showcasing a multitude of artistic voices.

BY
VERONICA GIKAS
MATHILDE DARMADY
ROWAN BLAND

CONTRIBUTIONS BY

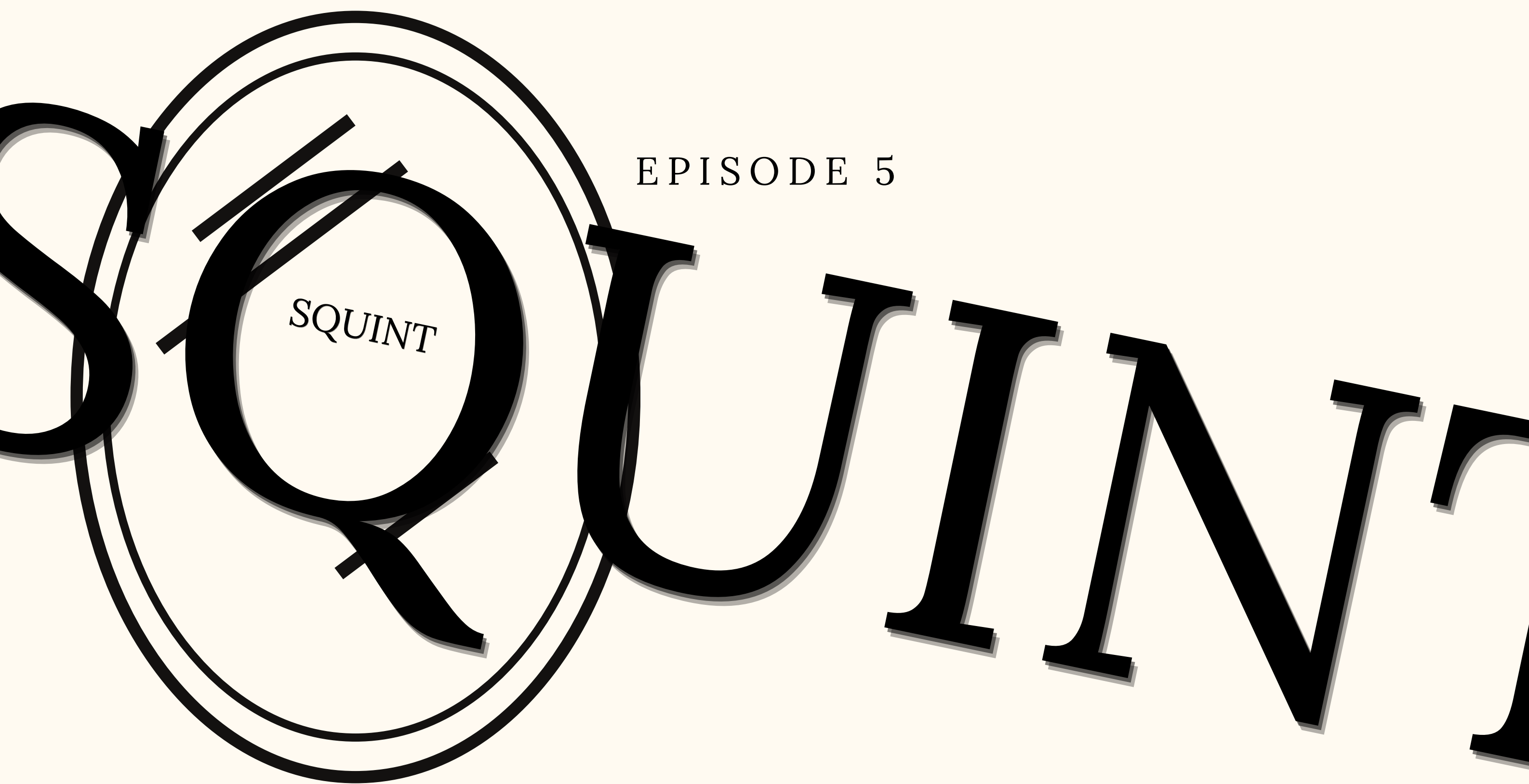
OLIVIA
BOULTHOT

ANA
MILOJEVIC

EMMA
GUERETTE

XAVIER
FORCIER

EPISODE 5

The title 'SQUINT' is rendered in a large, bold, black serif font. The letter 'S' is partially cut off on the left. The letter 'Q' is enclosed within a double-lined circular border. Inside the circle, the word 'SQUINT' is written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. The letters 'U', 'I', 'N', and 'T' are also in the same large serif font, with a slight shadow effect. The overall design is graphic and modern.

Big bad night. It comes at the end of an uneasy two, three, four weeks when the balance inside of me falters. I can feel the scale sliding down inside of me, coiling and cold like a snake. It reaches the pit and spits its venom. Chipped kerb smudged white with. Smudged beige with si. Wi. Vo. Wi. Schmu j wiv. Splatters on my trainers. Fioritura. Don't know. How long. I've. There's a text, 3, 7 texts on my phone. Where. Don't bother coming. Now. Answer. Are you. When I curve down the side streets of this new city there's no familiarity to safely envelop me. I push on and push on and push on, my ears ringing with snippets of your voice shoving its way through the crackling phone line, interrupting and devastating. Phone lost. On the high street, I find an antiques shop and press against the window, squinting to catch the time on a grandfather clock sulking in the corner. IV. I press four fingertips against my thigh to remember as I continue down to the river, tapping a rhythm.

When I reach the water, I realise my mouth is bleeding. I mark the railings of my new city with the blood, the novelty of a new paradise well-worn off. Through the gum in the corners of my eyes, I try to count the silver ridges that slice through the water as it pushes itself up in ripples. Jewellery box, open and patient. The curve of the ring I slid down your jutting knuckle, a playdough pretend ceremony.

I don't want to go home. And I don't.

FALSE START PRODUCTIONS

A COLLECTION OF POEMS

VIEW
HERE

I will never be warm again

A collection of piercingly fresh poetry from Kayleigh Mai Hinsley and Cat Johnston accompanied by Elliot Hetherton's original music.

Jonston's writing drenches the reader's imagination with different senses, while Hinsley's poetry is filled with tender, bubble-like recollections of childhood. Together, their words fluctuate between tunneling into the fogginess of the past and encapsulating the present with a terse vividness.

Read the words aloud to Hetherton's ethereal score for the full experience.

CATRIONA JOHNSTON

KAYLEIGH MAI HINSLEY

ELLIOT HETHERTON

EPISODE 6

GRIND

I've crawled to somewhere new that doesn't like me. You're not here and I did not come looking for you. Bad night carries on until I forget what day of the week it is. When I go to work I try to figure out why I'm there. The other staff do too.

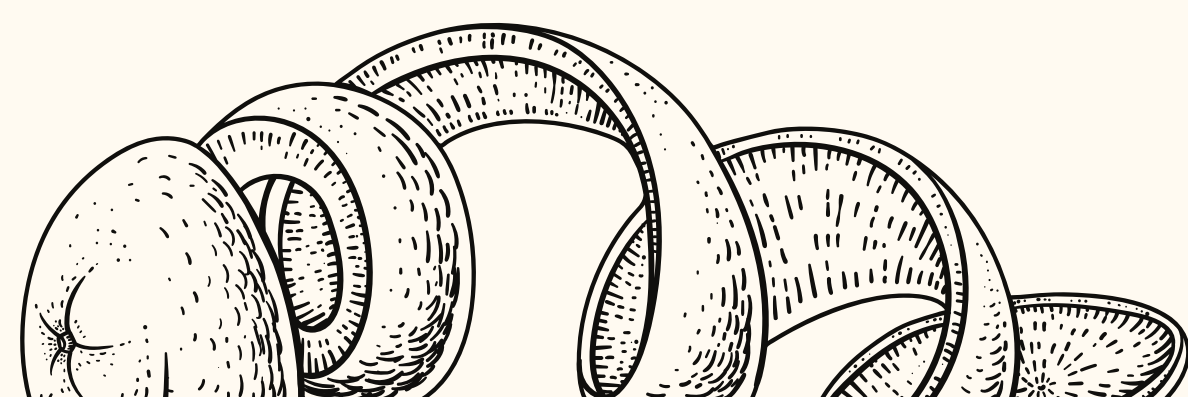
Two-month-old soup on the hob. Forgotten what my clothes look like. I don't see them when I look in the mirror. Feel a cold ring of metal around my forehead. Upside down cake bowl. Clang-clongs when I move and squeezes around my skull when yawns tighten my temple. Go to lick sugar memory from my lips but they're cracked dry. Wince at the smell of my tongue.

Don't see my clothes but can feel them. Too close to. Can feel noise. Each noise outside becomes a steady hum. Can feel it vibrate on my tongue. Close my eyes to shut it out. Shut it. Can't look at my phone but it hasn't left my hand. Ringing out and out and out, all the way out to sea.

Can and don't and need and want and none of it matters. I stare into the corners of my room, expecting them to change when my back's turned, willing anyone to come in and paint the

walls and strip the floorboards for something new to look at. Paint thinner to scrub. Peel back with no fight. Skin off a tangerine and leave the rinds to rot.

I did not come looking for you, but I'm disappointed when you're not there.



Drowning Rock

8 DEGREES ABOVE FREEZING
DURATION IN WATER:
30 MINUTES
MULL, SCOTLAND

KEIR AITKEN

[VIEW
HERE](#)

Keir Aitken explores how purpose(lessness) affects our perception of time in his endurance performance, 'Drowning Rock', in which he floats, naked and stationary, in the just above freezing waters of Mull, Scotland.

The length of performance was randomly generated and timed by a collaborator. The physical and mental strain of his extended ocean submersion directed the spoken word which accompanies the piece, to explore fearing the passage of time, finding flow in meaningless acts, and the trap of our constant search for purpose.

EPISODE 7

GUILT

The water attempts to fix it. I sit in the bath until I am ready to leave, and slowly I begin to see more hours of the day. A thousand tiny forces slowly start to thread feeling back through my limbs. Friends I haven't spoken to in months poke their heads round my door and we spend hours on the couch, on the rug, piecing things together and glueing them down. They travel down to the city I sought to hide in on overpriced trains that lace my old home to my new, the tracks drip feeding me something like nostalgia, but stronger. These friends are the source of memories made before you, and the guilt knowing I let myself forget them stings. They are memories of being loved, and I coorie into the lilts in the accents I haven't heard for a long time.

One night, I sit in the middle seat in the back of a new friend's car. She's driving us through to morning after a late night, but I don't sleep. Bordered by the two pairs of drunk-slumped legs and strings of tiny white lights either side of the road that dissolve and stretch as we thunder silently past them, the motorway stretches out in front of me in a never-ending straight line. If I look close enough, I can see the two roads that have become clearer to me over the past month: a life without you, or an attempt to go back.

My friend turns the music on low. It's a song I've never heard before. Or not heard in years. And I realise that healing will have to be practised.

I sit back and harden my skin against the cold leather as the song hums low through the car. It's a new skin I hadn't realised I'd grown. When I get home, I slip into the bath as the sun starts to rise and smooth over the bumps on new skin until it glows.



RHIANNON BIRD
VICKY MACRAE

The Roots And the Wings

This interactive animated webpage comes from another collective formed by the False Start team. 'the roots and the wings' offers animation, poetry, nostalgic snippets of pop-culture and musings on the passage of time with welcoming, open hands.

Conceptualised by the two women, the final piece is a beautifully illustrated digital world, each section a key-hole peek into the past. A conversation between the two collaborators accompanies the colourful site, drawing us further into the intimacy present in every aspect of the work. You can even add your voice to the piece by writing a message in the 'guest book': what will you take with you? What will you leave behind?

Drawing on a variety of different media, Bird and MacRae have created a piece that explores the relationship between the roots that ground us and the wings that allow us to fly the nest.

VIEW
HERE

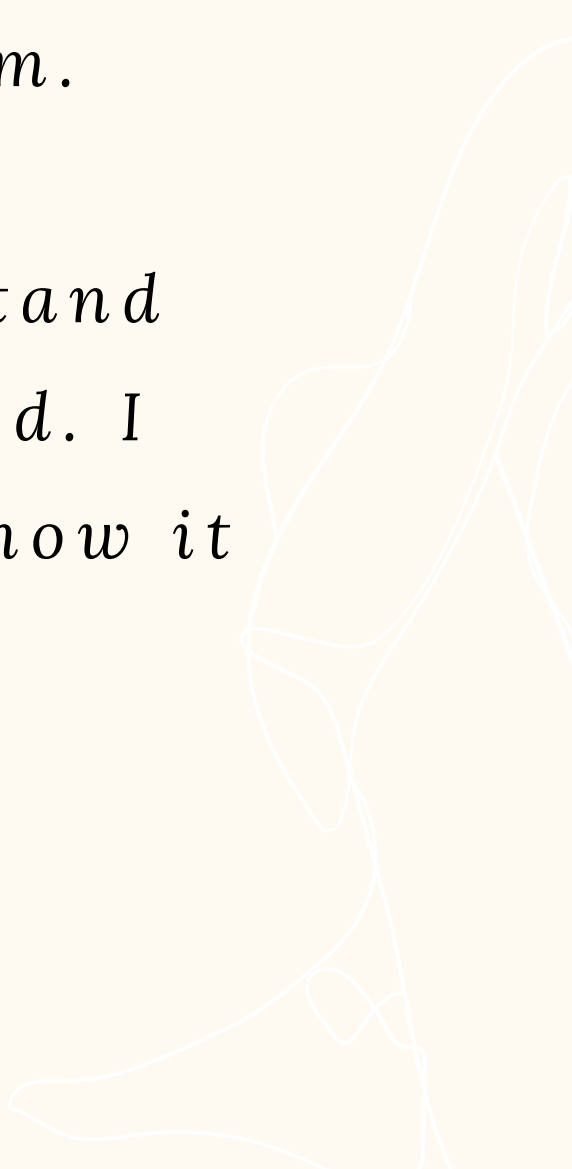
EPISODE 8

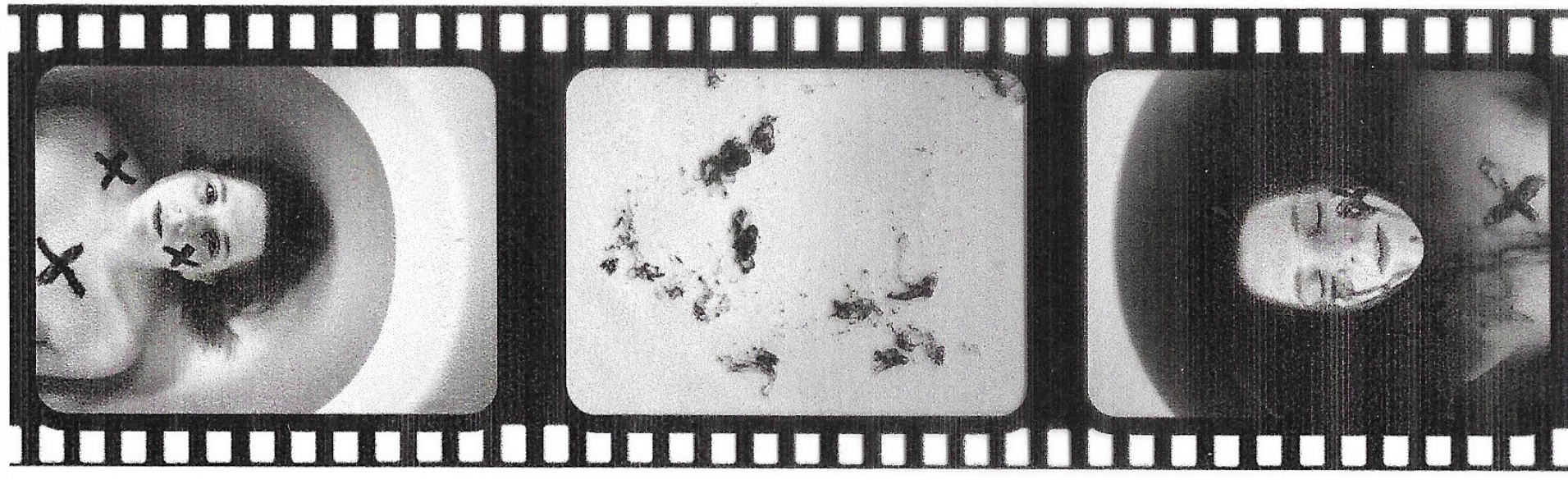
FOLD

I've washed my eyes and ears with substances that tried to destroy and words that tried to soothe, scrubbing to uncover a clarity quickly forgotten in the mornings. But at some point, things started to readjust. I can almost feel the rush of liquid in my ear as it re-balances and the dizziness slowly stops spinning behind my eyes. It's not a new me, but it's newer than the old news, as if I've bumped into myself on a street I've never walked down. One they've just finished building.

New peace.

I look at myself. Aside from a few marks, it's all the same. It's the body I believe you loved, the body I know how to keep now. It felt itself fold in and bruise until it learned it had to choose change, not just accept it. Until it learned there are more things you can choose, if you want them. Want comes. A warm release flourishing dark. But it lightens instead of drowns and for a moment I understand why my gran always prayed. Why you sometimes prayed. I had always been suspicious of contentment, but I see now it was a fear of knowing what was necessary. But not anymore.





Memory Box

VIEW
HERE

by
Dana Leslie

SPECIAL THANKS

AVA HICKEY

ANNE LESLIE

SCOTT LESLIE

PETE YEARWORTH

CATRIONA TAYLOR

SAM GRACE

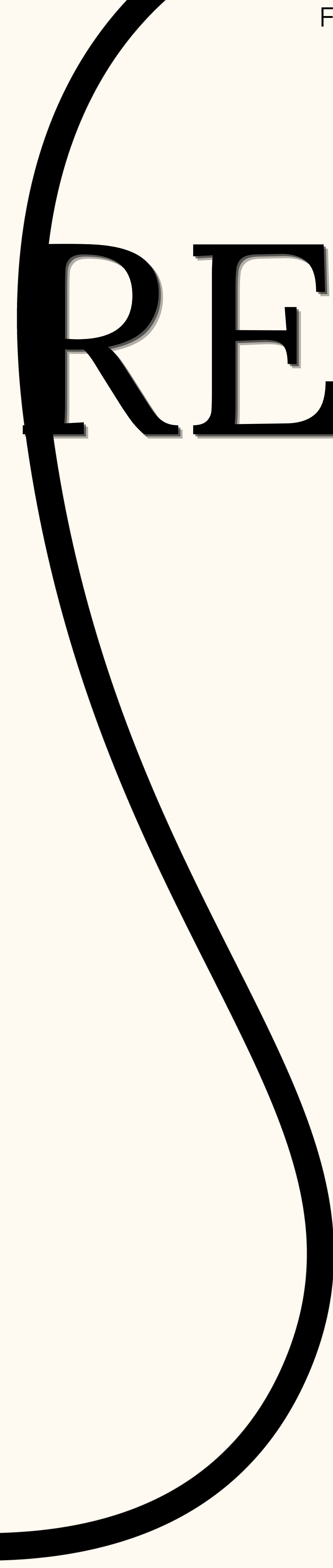
COMET

FALSE START PRODUCTIONS

This creative response is divided into three sections - 'place', 'body' and 'wash' - forming a collection of detailed, inventive artworks. Incorporating original prints, photography and audio interviews, Leslie's digital installation is a powerhouse of creative energy and ingenuity.

ALL THE WONDERFUL INTERVIEWEES AND SURVEY RESPONDENTS WHO WILL REMAIN ANONYMOUS - THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR MEMORIES.

EPISODE 9



RETURN

There is no thrashing tempest. The pull I feel is the steadiest lull, as quiet as being carried to bed. It pulls at my eyelids like an old cartoon until they're opened wide to see if now, with age having worked its way through time, our old home can become a new one that we both want to live in. To meet each other among the salt and the fish, limbs flailing in the same sea. Wound back up. Ribbon, taught against the bobbin.

Travelling back. I unpin the strange clothes the time I've spent without you has fastened onto my body, pricked with longing.

The ligaments in my neck and back stretch as I peer into the lip of the tunnel. At the other end of the line, the other end with a different, new opening - I'll reach my hand out to you. This is my act. There's no guarantee of a happy ending and even less possibility of reliving a time that felt perfect. I've reconstructed towers upon towers only to watch the blade pierce their weakest points and demolish them. I've done it enough times to know that each moment that passes is a temporary gift: no one gets to keep them. I know that now and I knew it then, sitting on the kitchen floor in your fourth floor flat, listening only to the scrape of your fork and scaling the walls with my eyes in an attempt at perfect preservation.

But this, I know, is my necessary act. This is my act of returning.

And I hope your number has stayed the same.

D

VIEW
HERE

r

CREATED
AND
PERFORMED
BY
NIAMH
MCCARRON

a

w

n

Niamh McCarron sets Marnie Russell's short story to a stunning short film. Shifting between intimate shots, McCarron style of overlapping frames creates a fluid, transient aesthetic, reminiscent of a mind journeying through subconscious thoughts before a clear realisation.

Shot in both private and public spaces of bathing, McCarron explores how we traverse these two spaces. Fuelled by the need to return, she breaks from the subdued privacy of the bath into the expansive freedom of the lake.

McCarron's piece concludes the serial, in an emotional yet peaceful act of returning.

FALSE START PRODUCTIONS

WRITING BY MARNIE RUSSELL

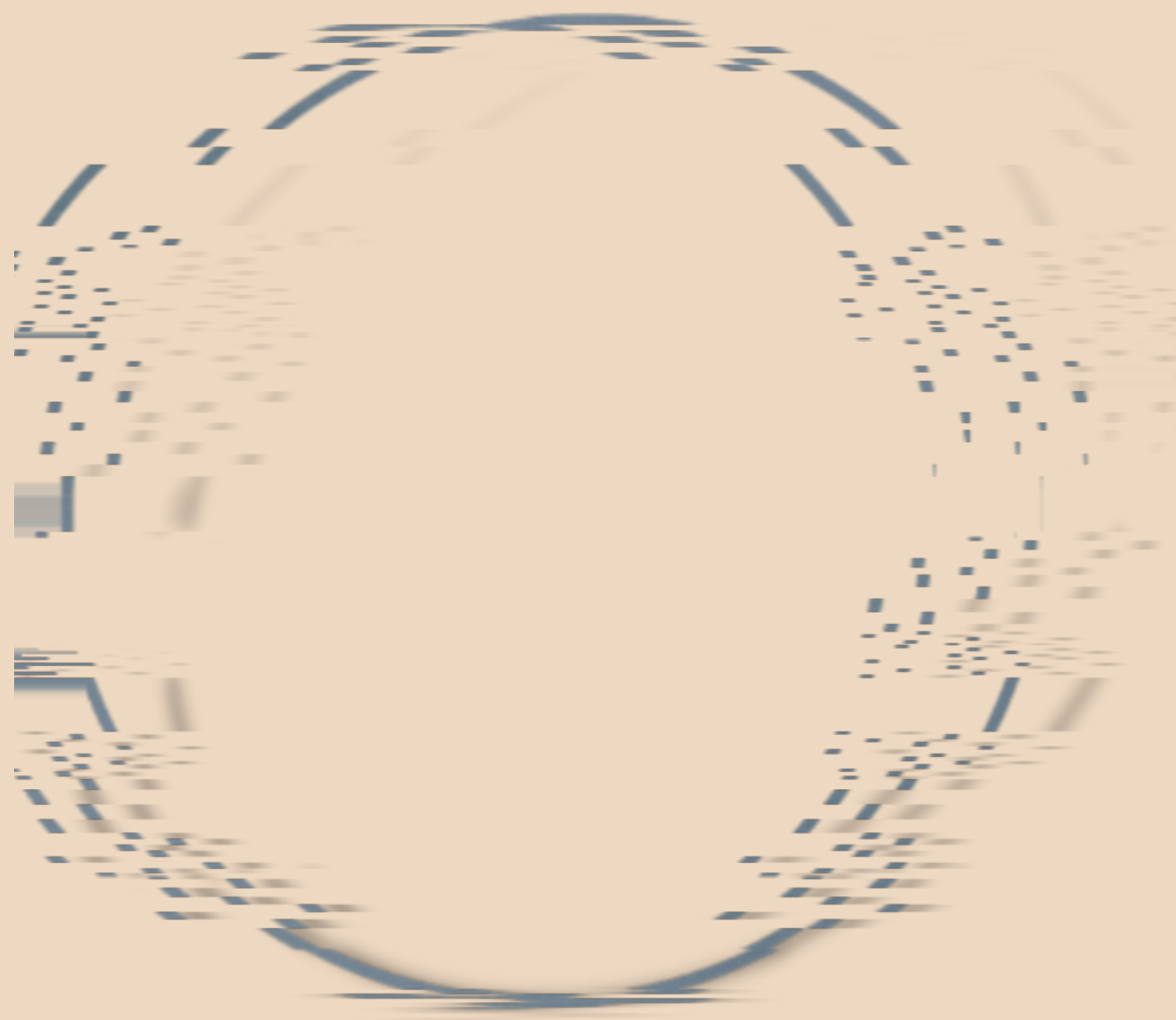
PRODUCED BY JENNIFER GALT

WE ARE PROUD TO HAVE CREATED THIS
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A MASSIVE THANK YOU TO ALL
OF OUR CONTRIBUTORS



ALBA | CHRUTHACHAIL



returning:
the act of
going home