

soothing streams

*we melted, soaked, dabbled, wrung, reflected, sank, drowned, swayed, paused, swished,
rippled, sprinkled, poured, swam, floated and dived*

–Róisín O’Gorman

Stagnating (ponds), pouring (rains), moistening (gel), dripping (sweat), cascading (showers) or evanescent (steams); water infiltrates our everyday as a tactile and living body.

Look up at the glass ceiling. Step out and follow the paved street’s curve.
Can you see it yet?

Deptford’s community beds in its Creek. Overlooked and odorant, the aqueous stream repels and fascinates. In the acid-green moss rests a plastic bag. Bottles and pebbles lay beneath the wavering ripples as the slobbery bed shelters its polluting treasures. The reflection of high-rise buildings shimmers on the brownish surface. Yet below the murky waters thrives a diverse biosphere. As the arm of the River Ravensbourne stretches into the city through its narrow and muddy tidal reach, the Creek channels its resilience to the urban dominance and springs a bridge between streams, city, and dwellers.

soothing streams responds to Deptford Creek’s outreach towards the Art Hub and enacts a re-encounter between viewers and water.

Rising towards the translucent glass surface, the sight of a floating dolphin and dangling seaweed welcomes you into the gallery space. Nora Bzheta’s sculptural installation extracted from a remembered seashore, arches towards the freeing of the self from borders, anchors and cords. In a corner, a blurred breaststroke breaks the tranquility of an orange pool’s fluid undulations. Reverberated across a triad of screens, Miles Tuddenham’s installation teases the thrill of a dive. Swimming memories are revived. Enveloping the room, drawings depict coloured aquatic dreamscapes, taking the viewer on a subconscious ocean voyage of spirituality and mythology. Borrowing from the flora and fauna on the Thames’ shores, Bart Hajduk unites our liquid imaginaries. A crackling sound leaks into the space. Plankton, or crushed salt crystals? As we sonically plunge underwater, a voice quietly whispers in the corner. Nikolai Azariah connects his research to the area with his latest audio work. From the back wall, the glow of two gestural photographic compositions reaches us. Dripping wet hands touch, quiet bodies wait, while a dark and sly substance seeps into the front seats and interrupts the drive. Extracted from Basile Huma’s series *2060*, the images interrogate the ecological threat of rising waters and subtly embrace our drowning fates.

The global water crisis is actually a world of local water crises.

The Art Hub Gallery becomes a meditative portal enabling a soothing reconnection with the nearby water.

Whilst anchored in the local context of Deptford, the show simultaneously speaks to contemporary concerns of climate justice, migration, and shorelines, and enables neglected stories of water pollution and urban rivers' stewardship to resurface. Mediating a communion between art intervention and community celebration, the exhibition follows the weekend of World Rivers Day, and flows into a global reflection on our water relations.

– Alexia & Berta