

TO BE WHAT WE ARE

This installation is a co-creation the result of an artistic laboratory guided by creative play. It is also a document of the space for play co-created by 18 Traveller children, two artists, four community and community support workers, parents, siblings and institutions.

The laboratory was guided by the children's interests and experiments and partially built on the work of the 'Groups,' an after-school art club for Traveller children at Cork City Partnership in Knocknaheeny, which has been active for over 15 years. It was led by Deirdre O'Regan and more recently Maeve McCarthy (Springboard Family Services) and Noreen O'Regan (Cork City Partnership). Eszter Némethi, an artist and theatre maker, began working with the 'Groups' in March 2022. She was invited by Cork Midsummer Festival and Springboard through BePart, a Creative Europe project that critically explores the politics and practices of participation in the arts. To Be What We Are was developed over the course of 9 weeks of hourlong workshops in Spring 2023 in collaboration with filmmaker Claire Murphy.



We wanted to create a space for playing together, where the children have agency and control over walls, their bodies and time. Where the adults agree to play along. A small space where we create the rules of the game together. Where gestures are as important as words. Where it is possible to wildly explore, to be curious and to be brave. Every week for an hour, we played and practised the wild process of making something together. We let our play guide us - allowing it to shape its own spaces, aesthetics, languages, rules, stories and problems. We allowed our play to create a small world.

This world of ours is full of action words:

flying printing transforming

playing pouring

moving marking

framing bickering being

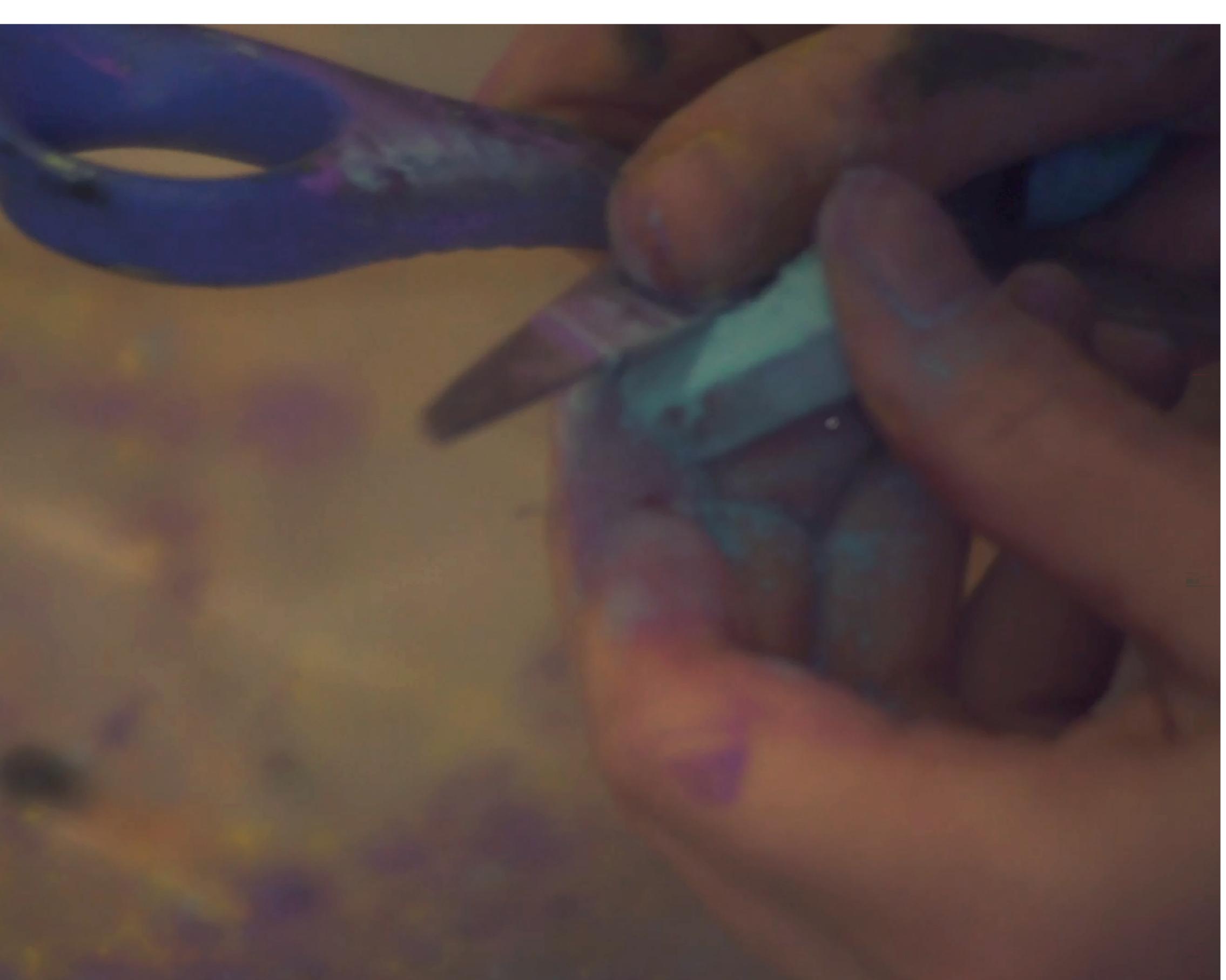
becoming

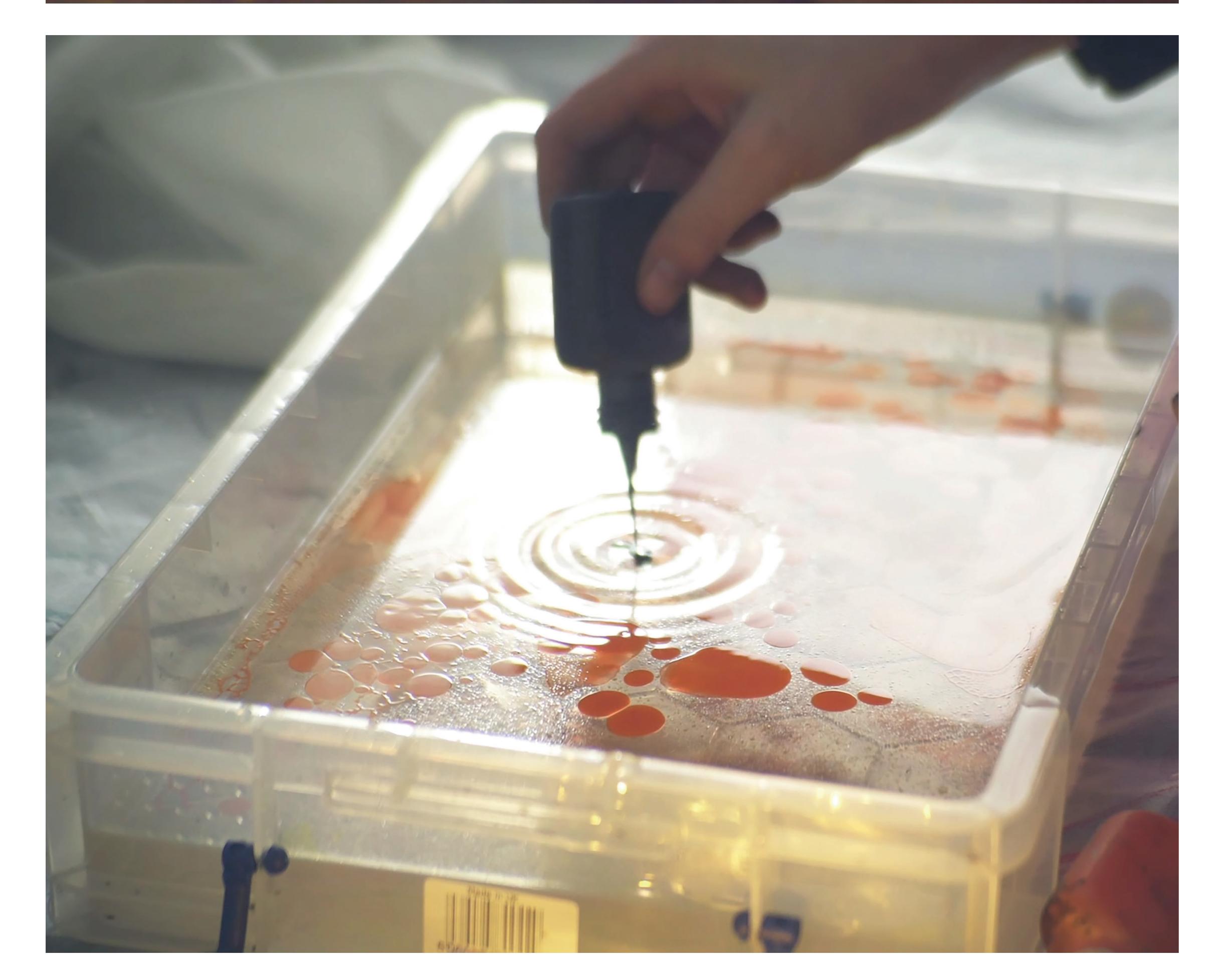
In our world, everything is happening right now. *To Be What We Are* is noisy, hard to catch, and beautiful like a flock of birds called a murmuration. It exists when you are here with its colourful mix of possibilities, changing shapes, attentions, frustrations and flying materials. It is a special place that is ours, and bursting to get to know you. This world of play is always on the brink of disappearing, almost ready to be left behind, but always found again.

This is our world to be what we are, and you are welcome.











Artists

Annalise, Candy, Cheryl, Bernie, Bridgie, Dolores, Helen Marie, Jennifer, Jimmy, Jimmy, Kathleen, Mariah, Mikey, Mossie, Rihanna, Ruby, Theresa, William

Lead Artist & Facilitator
Eszter Némethi

Film-maker
Claire Murphy

Project Worker

Maeve McCarthy –

Springboard Family Support Project, Tusla

Community Support Workers
Ann Stokes
Helen O'Reilly

Community Development

Noreen O'Regan – Cork City Partnership

Producer

Susan Holland – Cork Midsummer Festival

Production Assistant

Dave O'Sullivan

Technicians & Build Paddy Cahill Dave O'Sullivan Dominic Fee Lauren Morrissey

Seamstress
Sinead Teahan

The residency of Eszter Nemethi is one of the fieldworks supported by Cork Midsummer Festival as part of the BePart art beyond participation project. BePart is a Creative Europe project that critically explores the politics and practices of participation in the arts. The project 'To Be What We Are' is funded by the Arts Council through an Arts Participation Project Award and supported by Springboard Family Services, Cork City Partnership and TUSLA.

With special thanks to the Stokes, O'Reilly and O'Donoghue families, Deirdre O'Regan, Melissa Kearsey (Dacent Print), JP Treacy, Eve Olney, Andrea Williams, all staff at Holyhill Community Center, Lorraine, Allyson and all at Cork Midsummer Festival, Dan and all at St.Peters, Veronica Kelly, Linda Curtin, Scott Duggan, Kath Gorman.

Presented first at Cork City Partnership, May 2023 and at St Peters for Cork Midsummer Festival, June 2023.

Capsule exhibition presented at National Child Protection and Welfare Social Work Conference at UCC, Oct 2023.

Filmwork presented at Homo Noveus Festival in Riga, Sept 2023. Filmwork will be presented at Cork Film Festival, 12 Nov 2023.













