What Does Normal Look Like? (2022, Whitson & Moody)
See bottom of document for links to trailer, screenings, supporting materials.

Current press coverage has focused on the film events bringing 'collective healing' to Bristol.

Press includes: BBC Points West TV piece, BBC News Online, Ransom Note (review), Bristol Life Magazine (print), BBC South West Radio with John Darvall, Ujima Radio (6th October), Bristol 365, Bristol 24/7.

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*"Your whole delusional dream of June being the day everything goes back to normality is a f***ing facade, fam."*

'What Does Normal Look Like?' is a 70 minute, collaborative documentary exploring lockdown's effect on Bristol's culture - day and night.

It will open in Bristol with 2 bespoke film events at Strange Brew (22nd October), with a tailored live set from key collaborator Kayla Painter, and a second at The Cube (9th November), followed by a live performance from percussionist Dan Johnson.

Pieces of the Bristol lockdown experience, captured and explored by a variety of artists, are woven into the fabric of this film - creating a collage form documentary which represent the biggest psychological and irrevocable changed of our lifetime, a powerful moment where some of us realised what we need as a collective society, finding out what we really were and what we really need to live.

The project began when the filmmakers first met photographing an empty city, driven by a need to document this time. Mini documentaries were created with Annie McGann from 'Save Bristol Nightlife' looking at individual venues, and soon the filmmakers were on a journey to expand the narrative to a city wide perspective.

Artist bio's

Tom Whitson
Photographer and filmmaker Tom works with labels, musicians and nights to promote and showcase musical talent. He is interested in human interiority reflecting the environments around them.

Colin Moody
The social environment and cultural spaces are Colins main fascinations. He works locally in Bristol and nationally as an award winning documentary photographer and creative.

Musicians
***'I'm not playing on my own down there… what an opportunity it was, to have an empty city.' -* Dan Johnson, from 'What Does Normal Look Like?'**

Experimental percussionist Dan Johnson felt compelled to explore the acoustics of lockdown, recordings from his solo performances in an empty tunnel form the backbone of the film - mirroring the rhythm of the continual locking and unlocking of the city. The film is sculpted around these pieces and the thought provoking electronic music of Kayla Painter - fragmented beats which threads together and brings to life the world of this film.

Venues as community spaces

'There is energy in every day venue space, in every night venue space, there is inherent energy there.' - **Grove, from 'What Does Normal Look Like?**

Broadening the definition of a community space - exploring venues which were birthed in lockdown, alongside those which struggled and were forced into new ways of thinking. *Featured venues include: Strange Brew, Lost Horizon, Dare Shack, Elmer's Arms, Trinity Centre, Dare To Club, St. Annes Boardmill Social Club and dozens of others.*

A collage documentary

"What the hell does normal look like?" - **A quote from a Kill the Bill protest.**

This was never going to be made like a normal documentary - what we were going through was not normal. The filmmakers found themselves creatively isolated but sought to collaborate with other creatives to explore all the intricacies of the lockdown experience. They developed a reactive filmmaking process which responded to the changing nature of lockdown and events that rose out of it, such as the BLM and KTB marches.

The screenings

"I want to be back in those spaces… where everyone is feeling the same thing" - **Jasmine Ketibuah-Foley, from 'What Does Normal Look Like?'**

For the filmmakers, a key component of the project is to take the film back into the spaces and places which built the project up in the first place. The film's release will begin with two screenings in October / November - marketed as film events with live music and an encouragement for discussion of the film's topics - the filmmakers intend to treat the film as an asset for the people to use - placemaking and improving their wellbeing, sense of place and purpose.

20 tickets for each screening are allocated to educators, students and NHS staff - in association with local companies like BoomSatsuma.

'What Does Normal Look Like?' provides a template for lockdown introspection which will resonate with audiences beyond Bristol too. Following the Bristol film release, we hope to show the film elsewhere - including a more national screening on the anniversary of lockdown (March 8th), as well as a run in the cinema tent at festivals: Glastonbury, Forwards Festival, Valley Fest, End of the Road Festival etc.

Press pack link:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1SyEV2BskLheCDoM93lE0tFH3Yv7Q8XDs?usp=share_link

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Film trailer - *https://vimeo.com/842932933*

Film screening links:

1 - The film, followed by a live set from Kayla Painter - Strange Brew, 22nd October

2 - The film, followed by a live performance from Dan Johnson - The Cube, 9th November

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