

Dear Mad Studies Network,

Thanks so much for your patience regarding our film discussion event - I am pleased to say that this month, we have Hannah facilitating a session on the film *Sincerely Survivor*. We hope you enjoy our brief foray into film club territory. We will have a shorter discussion in recognition that it is a busy time of year, but leave the Zoom link open until our usual end time for those who wish to catch up for the holidays!



RMIT MAD STUDIES READING GROUP

END OF YEAR EVENT AND FILM DISCUSSION

Join us to discuss 'Sincerely Survivor: The
Dance Film' with the
choreographer/director, Hannah Friebel,
and for a social catch up with Network
members

Tuesday 21st December 2021
7pm - 8.30pm AEDT
*(7-7.45pm Film Discussion, 7.45-8.30pm
Catch Up for those interested)*
Via Zoom

The Zoom link for this event is available on the
website madstudiesmelb.net
Please email madstudiesmelb@gmail.com for a
link to the film if you haven't seen it yet!

Date: Tuesday 21st December 2021

Time: 7pm-8.30pm AEDT (Melbourne time) 45 minute film discussion and 45 minute social time

Here is a link to the [Google Calendar invite](#) for those who would like to add it to their calendar

[Zoom link](#)

Meeting ID: 683 0428 4052

Password: 123456

Facilitator: [Hannah Friebe](#)

Topic: Sincerely Survivor – The Dance Film

Sincerely Survivor is a film that explores an art-based research approach to the mental health system and informal response to the Victorian Royal Commission. The film was created as a documentation of Director Hannah Friebe's recovery journey who found healing through dance and movement (rather than talk therapy). In this work, dancers take on the role of pilgrims, exploring asylums of old - using art to enable our empathy. The dance choreography was entirely improvised with one-take cinematography, where dancers had a score to 'be present with the space, be present with each other and be present with yourselves'. Four artist residencies were held at the (now abandoned) J Ward Asylum for the Criminally Insane, Aradale Lunatic Asylum and Pleasant Creek Hospital, with the footage edited together throughout 2020. Sincerely Survivor the Dance Film debuted at Melbourne Fringe Festival last year and was awarded the Best Emerging Performance Ensemble Award, described by audiences as saying "there are no words to truly describe that experience. You expressed what can't be found in the writings, reports and rationales of countless people without lived experience"..."I was deeply moved... At the end I just sat quietly for a while, it deeply touched my spirit."

The film runs for 50 minutes and may contain triggering themes pertaining to mental health, institutional abuse and trauma. The trailer [can be watched here](#). Contact us at madstudiesmelb@gmail.com if you would like the link to watch the whole film.

Here are some prompt questions to get you thinking!

- How did you feel when you watched the film? What thoughts or emotions came up for you? Any artistic responses?
- Did this work make you feel like your experiences of mental health were seen, understood and empathised with?
- How can The Arts act as a tool for documenting our healing, finding new language and enabling social change?
- What are the connections and learnings we can make between the consumer/survivor experiences of the 1990's Victorian mental health system reforms, and the present day reform agenda?
- How can The Arts offer people with lived experience more accessible ways of telling their story?
- How can The Arts be integrated in approaches to mental health research?
- How is art-based storytelling empowering for people with lived experience?

More info about Sincerely Survivor (and its emerging identity as The Lived Experience Creative Agency) can be found at www.sincerelysurvivor.org.

Looking forward to seeing you then, but if not, wishing you all the best until we meet again in 2022.

Take care,

Antonia and Zara