

GRIEF FLOATS

“Site specific dance at its most exquisite”



COMPANY OF OTHERS

CHOREOGRAPHER'S NOTE

I made Grief Floats, as a response to our fading sense of humanity, and the grief that has conjured in me. It is hard to not be completely overwhelmed with grief, at the daily, global events that are unfolding. But we must remain hopeful, and whilst Grief Floats as Grief Floats is a protest, it is also an act of hope.

We live in a time of televised genocide, of individualism and prioritising of self that has led to rising nationalism, that has fuelled capitalism and is ultimately destroying our planet. A decades coming turning point in our ability to see ourselves as global siblings, and instead seeing us turning away people seeking sanctuary from the wars and environmental disasters the West has created.

I made Grief Floats as an offering of a moment of communal reflection, an invitation to be together in our grief, to recognise the grief in each other, in the hope that healing our own grief, will enable us to remember we are part of a global community and give us more capacity to feel.

We are Company of Others, we are made up of people who experience being 'othered' by the society we live in, because of who we are. Each performer has their own journey through the work, that has been crafted with their own lived experiences, rituals, and context held closely.

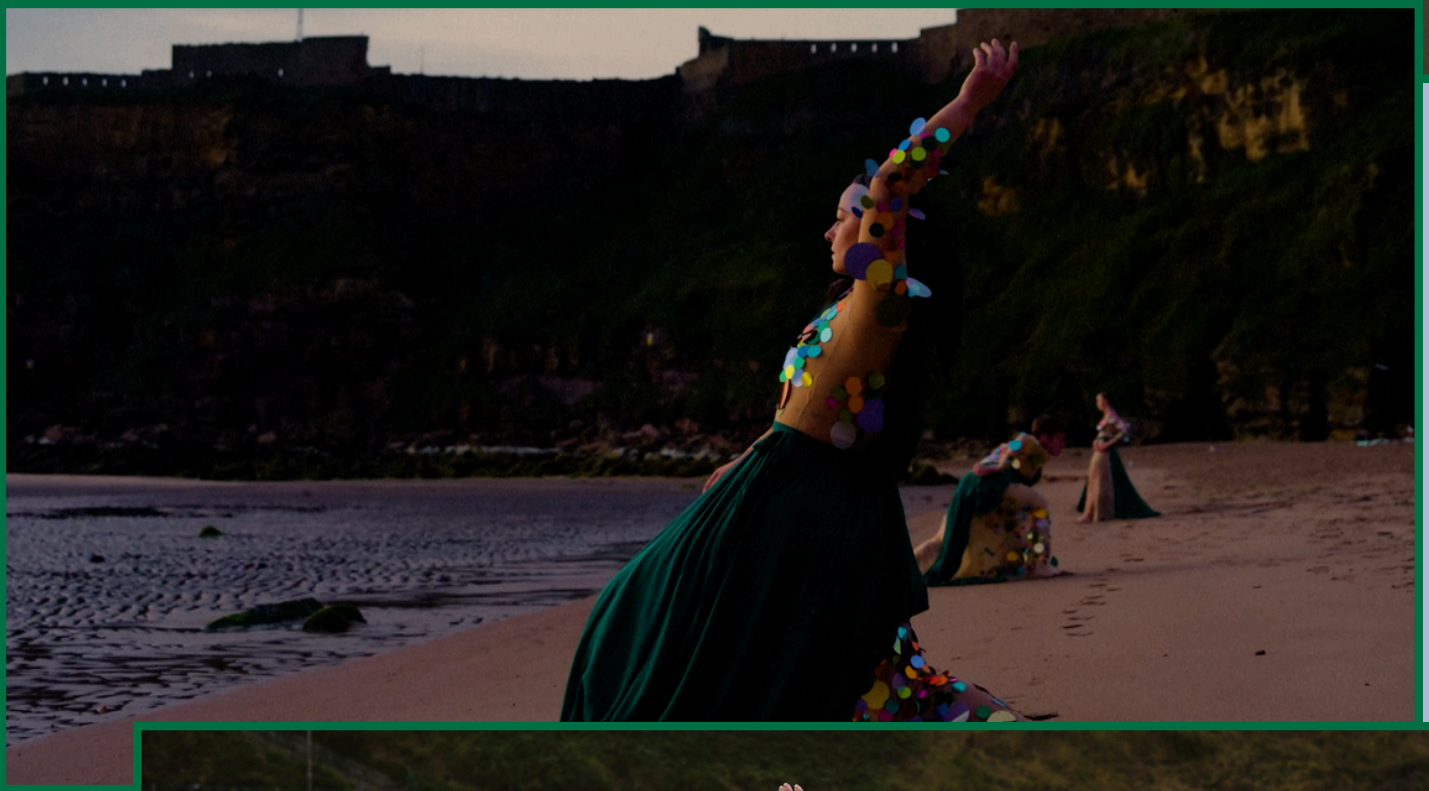
This work is made through our lens, and from our perspective. Therefore, every choice I have made in the making of this work is thoughtfully intentional. The costumes force us to see the 'othered' bodies in the work as beautiful, magical yet human, beings worthy of care. The performers face out into the sea for the whole performance in recognition of the lives that have been lost to the ocean for hundreds of years because of the violent politics on land, and a section in the work gives the performers, who are people often not afforded the grace of being able to be visibly angry, yet have much reason to be, space to unleash their pain.

Purposefully, the work takes place amongst people enjoying the beach, just as our grief exists alongside life carrying on around us. These things can live alongside each other if we allow them to, grief doesn't have to be hidden away.

One of my favourite parts of the work is a section called The Call. 9 performers are pulled, at times with resistance, towards the sea, towards healing, towards themselves, towards the reality of our global context. It is an amplification of the very moment we choose to survive, the moment we choose living over giving up and the moment we choose to keep loving ourselves and others. We know grief only exists because love has existed, Grief Floats is an invitation to not turn away, to keep looking at the grief, to keep protesting for all of us, and to honour our ancestral ways of healing and being together. We already have the road map for a better world, we just have to remember it.

Grief Floats is a queering of all we think outdoor work should be. It is an act of resistance and defiance, yet a beautiful invitation to be alongside us. It is not light in spirit, yet warm. Not joyful, yet full of hope.

Nadia Iftkhar, Artistic Director & CEO, Company of Others.





GRIEF FLOATS IS A PROTEST, AN HONOURING, A REMEMBERING...

It is a long-term project which will offer ways of reconnecting the mind and body during times of grief through workshops, discussions and performances.

Grief Floats was shared with audiences for the first time on August 2023, and we premiered the full work in August 2024 to over 1000 audience members, at King Edward's Bay in Tynemouth, UK. This is Company of Others first outdoor work, set against the breathtaking backdrop of the ocean.

Grief Floats was made as an acknowledgement of, and response to the lack of humanity being shown to those most vulnerable in our world, and the feeling of grief that this can ignite. It is made through the lens of people who experience being 'othered' and reflects on the unique experiences we have such as grieving the loss of connection to our ancestral lands that a person of the diaspora might experience.

We're all experiencing grief in some form that may be related to personal losses, communal losses or connected to the many global events that are affecting our siblings, the work is for anyone who has a relationship with grief.

Although the work engages with the experience of grief, Grief Floats has been crafted to appear in public settings where people might be enjoying a family day at the beach, and therefore is accessible and enjoyable for all ages.

Before reading about the work, we ask you to watch our film, crafted with you in mind.

[WATCH THE GRIEF FLOATS FILM HERE.](#)



CONCEPTS FROM OUR COLLABORATIVE ART FORMS

COSTUME

The pieces echo the way the sea reclaims all, breaking us down to our core components and allowing space for new life to take hold. The performers are monuments out at sea, in various stages of decay. Some still have their outer shells whilst others have been chipped away—their core on display. Sparkling in the sunlight, eroded by the waves.

SOUND

The sound design is sometimes clarifying, sometimes disorienting in its relationship to the dancer's and the environment in which the show takes place.

We wanted there to be a deeply ritualistic aspect to the music that can be both familiar and disconcerting. Drones, foley, found sound, modal harmonies and wordless vocalising are used to reflect different phases of an all-consuming, non-linear grieving process; culminating in a unique, dissonant durational hymnal to both heavy loss and the healing potential of water and movement.

For those that would find listening to some of these sounds challenging, we have created an alternative score that is more tranquil, with sound bowls.



CREATIVE TEAM

GRIEF FLOATS

Nadia Iftkhar – Director & Choreographer
Joanne Bernard – Rehearsal Director
Lily Dooks – Production Assistant
Beccy Owen – Sound Designer
Phillip Brown – Costume Designer
Amy Wilson - Production Manager
Jamie Michael Korn – Film Director
Sekeenat Karim – Producer



GRIEF FLOATS PERFORMING COHORT

Nadia Iftkhar
Patrick Ziza
Alicia Meehan
Cora Jay Williams
Michaela Wate
Amy Becke
Payal Ramchandani
Amari Webb-Martin
Jeremiah Olusola
Roshaan Asare
Kieron Wilson



COMPANY OF OTHERS

Nadia Iftkhar – Artistic Director & CEO
Emma Whitenstall - Operations & Resource Lead
Lily Dooks – Artistic Coordinator
Maya Torres – Administrative Assistant
Sekeenat Karim – Producer (Productions)

AUDIENCE RESPONSE & PRESS COVERAGE

“Site specific performance at its most exquisite”

AUDIENCE MEMBER, GRIEF FLOATS, 2023

“Grief Floats is like nothing I've ever seen before. Utterly brilliant.”

ALEX, AUDIENCE MEMBER, GRIEF FLOATS, 2023

“Such a moving and beautiful piece but also profoundly cathartic, it felt like an intrusion into something deeply personal but also universal and inviting, from the awestruck toddlers watching on the beach to the women who got into the water alongside you, the audience became part of it and it was an honour to be there.”

SARAH, AUDIENCE MEMBER, GRIEF FLOATS, 2023

“I came twice - to an evening performance and a sunrise performance. I absolutely loved it last year, and even more this year. Without a doubt one of the best things I've ever seen and brings up so many thoughts and feelings even just thinking about it. Felt so lucky to have seen it.”

AUDIENCE MEMBER, GRIEF FLOATS, 2024

”Thank YOU! What a beautiful expression of grief like I've never seen it before”

AUDIENCE MEMBER, GRIEF FLOATS, 2024

“The performance encapsulated perfectly the wild and unwavering nature of grief and gently encourages a collective reflection on all that we may yet lose. I quietly sobbed at its beauty whilst stood on the bay.

Congratulations to all involved. A triumph.”

VICTORIA, AUDIENCE MEMBER, GRIEF FLOATS, 2023



GRIEF FLOATS 2024 PRESS AND MEDIA COVERAGE INCLUDES:

[The Guardian](#) (National Print), [BBC News](#) (National TV), [Channel 4 News](#) (National TV), [Living North Magazine](#) (Regional Print), [The Crack](#) (Regional Print)

GRIEF FLOATS IS AVAILABLE FOR TOURING FROM 2025!

We are seeking venues, festivals and partners who would like to collaborate on bringing Grief Floats to audiences internationally.

CURRENT TOURING TEAM

Nadia Iftkhar – Artistic Director & Choreographer

Joanne Bernard – Rehearsal Director

Performers – 9 / 10 if live sound is preferred

Amy Wilson - Production Manager

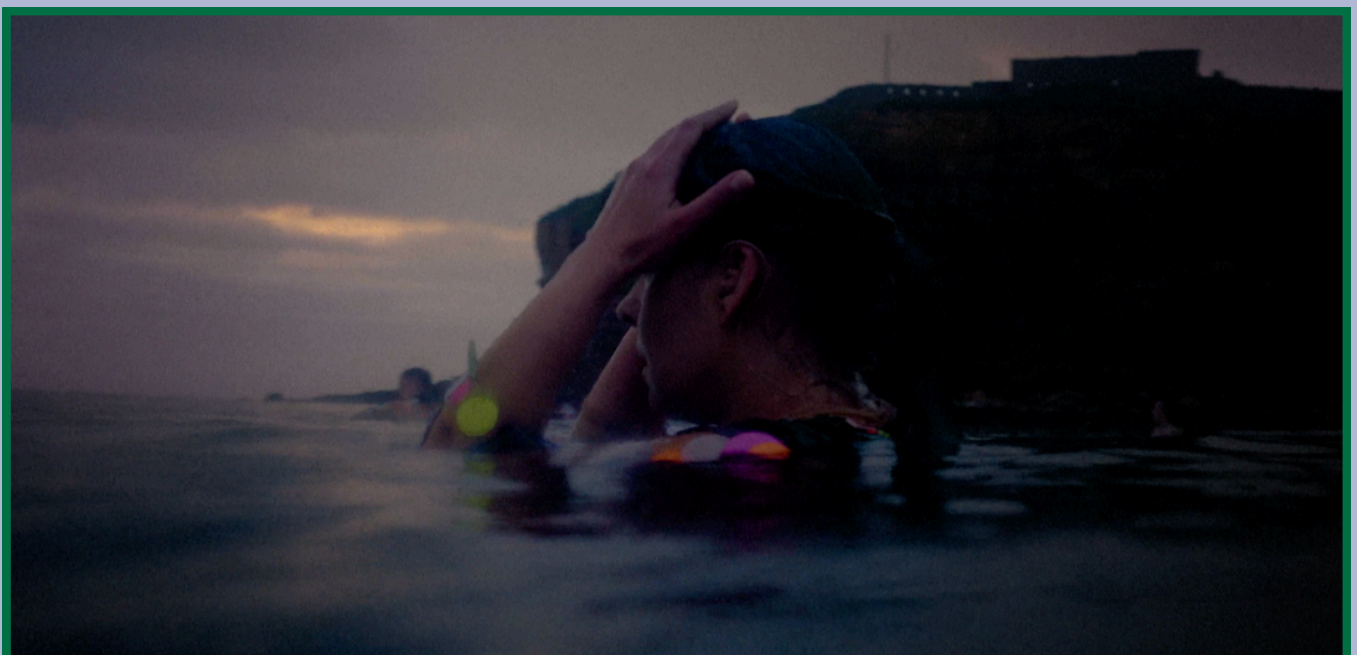
Lily Dooks – Production Assistant

We are passionate about expanding our audiences for this piece and welcome different formats for the show to tour globally. This may include but is not limited to

- Reduced number of performers for touring.
- The AD/Choreographer and Rehearsal Director touring and working with local performers and creatives to develop an international presentation of the show relevant to the host's context.
- Partners receive a copy of the score for a local choreographer and team to develop independently with our support.

GET IN TOUCH

If you would like to discuss the show, please get in touch with Nadia at nadia@companyofothers.org.uk



TECHNICAL SPEC

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENT

Our show is performed in the ocean and is closely connected to the natural environment. As a result, we prioritise environmental consciousness in our work. We aim to be environmentally responsible by reusing costumes from previous years and minimising the need for new costumes unless necessary. Our costumes use biodegradable sequins, which are double-stitched to reduce the risk of waste in the ocean. Our production doesn't have a set; instead, we utilise the natural ocean surroundings as our backdrop, reducing freight and carbon emissions for future tours. Additionally, we conduct beach combs before every performance, clearing any waste and harmful materials.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PERFORMANCE

This performance is designed for sand beaches and is not suitable for performances on pebble beaches. For the safety of our cast and creative team, this performance requires the following technical support to be provided by partners at every location.

- 1 x Ambulance staff on-site at each performance
- 2 x Lifeguards must be on-site at each rehearsal and performance
- Dry room access at a nearby location
- Locations must have Good – Excellent water quality
- A beach comb is required before the performance of each show to ensure the safety of the company

IN ADDITION TO THIS, WE ASK PARTNERS TO PROVIDE:

- Sound technician and operator
- Production Assistant
- Event Stewards
- Costume assistant
- Radio mics - 2 of Sennheiser G4 or equivalent one Handheld and one headset microphone.
- Minimum of NRG BLUETTI EB240 Portable Powerpack 2.4kwh battery pack or equivalent.
- Silent Disco headphones and transmitters: RF309 Wireless Headsets, TX50RF Transmitter and RF8650 Wireless Headphone Receiver.
- Two-way radio system - 12 radios for onsite team communication
- 9 RF8650 Headphone receivers for the performer's packs.

ACCESSIBILITY OF OUR WORK

- At Company of Others, we aim to make the dance and theatre sector more accessible, kinder, and safer for people who have experienced otherness. We work to ensure that venues and locations are accessible to all audiences and our ticket prices are not a barrier to accessing our work. We will not perform on beaches that are not accessible or do not offer step-free access.
- Our performances of Grief Floats have previously included live audio descriptions curated especially for the show. Where possible, it's important to us that tickets are either free or Pay as you Feel. We are committed to continuing to make performances of Grief Floats accessible.
- We invite all venues and partners to consider how they can make Grief Floats accessible to all, and welcome conversations about access.



PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- We have developed and can deliver wraparound activity for audience development and grief awareness as part of this production. This can include;
- **Post-show discussion:** Join us on the beach with the Choreographer and/or Rehearsal Director of Grief Floats to hear more about why and how our show was made.
- **Collaborative workshops and events:** These workshops are collaborative and focus on grief, healing, and creativity.
- **Professional Development Workshops:** Workshops focus on developing and exploring skills such as choreography for outdoor spaces, devising movement collaboratively, and creating a care-filled rehearsal environment.

We would also be interested in crafting bespoke engagement activities with our host venue or partner.

ABOUT COMPANY OF OTHERS

Company of Others is a dance theatre company based in the North East of England, led by Artistic Director and Choreographer Nadia Iftkhar.

We collaborate with people who have experience of being 'othered' by the society we live in, to co-create dance theatre experiences which highlight and share stories of the human experience through their lens.

Artistry, Equity & Integrity are our values - We do not accept ethical compromise.

Our aim as a company is to leave the dance and theatre sector more accessible, kinder, and safer for people who have experienced otherness, than where we first found it.

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR & CEO

Nadia Iftkhar is a professional dance artist and founding Artistic Director & CEO of Company of Others. She has over 20 years' experience working in a diverse range of settings, including work with companies such as; Talawa Young People's Theatre, Theatre Wallay, Luke Pell and Collaborators, Tara Theatre, The National Theatre, and Janice Parker Projects.

As a choreographer she is interested in how we physically unlearn, learn and share our histories and memories. Her work seeks to create interdependent micro communities that centre care as practice, resulting in courageous and ambition artistic interruptions.



**Originally commissioned by
Kala Sangam, North Tyneside Council and Dance City and funded by Arts
Council England**

Company of Others' current and past partners and collaborators include:
Durham University, ARC Stockton, GemArts, Common Wealth, Newcastle City Council,
NHS, Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Northern Stage, and Yorkshire Dance.

COMPANY OF OTHERS



CONTACT: nadia@companyofothers.org.uk

 [Company of Others](#)  [@company_others](#)  [@company_others](#)  [companyofothers.org.uk](#)

Images: 1. Lily Dooks 2 & 3. Jamie Michael Korn 4. Luke Waddington 5. Jamie Michael Korn 6&7. Luke Waddington 8. Jamie Michael Korn
9. Luke Waddington 10. Jamie Michael Korn