

DITTO

The film opens to a black screen with the word DITTO in white text in the centre of the screen.

The black and white film fades into a group of dancers in a rehearsal studio.

A heavily distorted sound fades in. It crashes repeatedly in the background, like waves breaking. A phasing stringed instrument plays up and down a scale, with some very short interruptions timed along with a repeated note that plays in the background, creating a marching rhythm. The sound plays repetitively throughout the section.

A young man, Francis, enters from the left, a young woman, Louise, enters from the right swinging her arms, and another young woman, Emily is shuffling forward on the floor. They all move to the centre of the screen. Louise moves behind Emily, who is sat on the floor, and places her hand on her shoulder. Francis moves to the right of the screen, turns to face the other way, and assumes a kneeling position. Another young woman, Tess, walks in from the right, crosses behind the group, turns her back to the camera and places her right hand on Louise's shoulder.

The film cuts to a closeup of Louise's face. She has straight hair, a blunt fringe, and is wearing black-rimmed glasses. She gazes out of the frame towards the top right. The camera pans backwards. The film cuts to a low angle shot showing Emily, still seated, with her arms spread wide and Francis, kneeling with one arm reaching up. The group begins to move like a singular unit, swaying and moving their arms. They all reach out and up together as the camera pans backwards.

The film cuts to a close-up of Emily, who is now seen standing on her own. She reaches her palm forward and flicks the ends of her fingers. The film cuts to a close up of Louise, her eyes following the movement of a hand. The film cuts to a mid-shot of the two dancers. Emily moves her outstretched hand in swirling motions, while Louise leans forward to bring her face close to the hand and follows the motion with her eyes and body. She appears transfixed on the hand. The film cuts to Francis and Tess moving in a similar fashion, with Francis being hypnotised by Tess' hand. The film cuts back and forth between the two couples and shows the movement from different angles, including close-ups and over-the-shoulder views of the different dancers. The leading dancers make swirly motions with their hands while their partners follow mesmerised. The film cuts back to all four dancers standing together in a square formation, swaying and reaching their arms up and out in unison, creating a rolling wave together.

The sound fades out as the screen turns black.

The words DITTO DITTO appear in the centre of the screen in white text, the words are stacked on top of each other.

The black and white film fades into two dancers in a rehearsal studio. A high-pitched chime rapidly playing a downward scale fades in. It has a heavy reverb/echo on it, sounding mystical and sparkly, and creates the sense of falling. A quiet phasing drone in the

background creates a rhythm. Half way through, the chime changes to an upward scale, creating a sense of rising. The sound plays repetitively throughout the section.

The back of Emily's head is visible in silhouette, and Louise can be seen across the floor in the background. They begin moving towards each other across the floor. Emily brings her arms up in a big arc, placing them in front of her and then twirling her legs around underneath her to move forward. Louise moves forward from her seated position in circles. The two dancers meet in the middle, cross each other and move into a seated back-to-back position. Moving in unison, they lean to one side, then to the other side, all the way down to the floor and then back up to centre. Emily leans forward and brings her chin to her chest while Louise follows her back, looking up. They repeat this motion in the opposite direction. Breaking from this seated position, they turn around each other and come to a standing position. Louise brings her hands out in a big arc and clasps Emily's hand. They move their joined hands over Louise's head while swaying, and then twirl around each other to come to a side-by-side position. A close-up shows their hands, palms upwards, wiggling and rolling their fingers.

The film cuts to the dancers in a face-to-face position. They throw their arms wide and bring them around each other as if in a hug, bringing their arms across each other, swaying back and forth, before curling around each other, gently touching each other's backs. The movement looks almost like seaweed dancing and swaying in the water.

They move back from one another in a twirling motion, before coming together again. As they face one another again they begin to step toward each other, reaching their arms out and clasping their hands high up in the centre. Pushing away from each other they move away from the camera together as the image fades out.

The sound fades out as the screen turns black.

The words DITTO DITTO DITTO appear in the centre of the screen in white text, the words are stacked on top of each other.

The black and white film fades in to show five dancers. The sound fades in, phasing strings merge with the chimes and drone, each running up and down a scale, phasing in and out with each other. Throughout there is a static undercurrent that creates an uncomfortably familiar sensation, like that of tuning a stationless radio. The sound plays repetitively throughout the section.

Francis is standing, with Lauren and Tess either side of him. Freya and Kaitlin are seated in front of them. Their position is symmetrical. Freya and Kaitlin move their arms forward in a wave motion. Behind them Francis reaches one arm up, grasps his fist, and brings his arm down, repeating this motion with the other hand, as if climbing a rope. After doing this motion three times, he pauses for a beat before continuing.

Lauren and Tess, on either side of him, are holding torches. With their arms outstretched they pan the torches side to side. The film cuts to a mid-shot of Francis, Lauren and Tess, and then to Freya and Kaitlin seated on the floor, before cutting to a close-up of the torches,

passing back and forth in front of the camera lens. It then cuts back-and-forth between a close-up of Francis' face and the flashing torch light. Francis stares towards the camera, the light changing over his face as the torches move around him. He reaches his hands up and grasps his face for a second, before dramatically throwing his hands down.

The film crossfades to Francis bringing his hands up, throwing his head around, flicking his hands and arms quickly, and throwing his head and hands down repeatedly, as if in great turmoil. Kaitlin and Lauren sway and roll on the floor, from side to side like crashing waves through which Francis is dramatically battling. The film cuts to Francis, visible only through a small gap of light on the otherwise black screen. Tess is standing facing Francis. She brings her hands together in a triangle shape in front of her face like a beak, then throws her arms back like a pair of wings, before bringing her arms above her head like feathers. She repeats the motion cyclically. Francis looks at her, entranced, and begins slowly moving towards her, eventually reaching his hand out towards her as she stretches her hand out towards him. The film shows each hand in close-up as they move to touch palm-to-palm. As their hand meets the film cuts to black and the sound ends abruptly.

The credits run at the end of the film, all white text on a black screen

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Soundscape by Michelle Duxbury

Videography by Michael Godsall

Choreographed by MeshDance

Dancers

Tess Donaghy

Francis Henry

Emily Kent

Louise Palin

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Soundscape by Michelle Duxbury

Videography by Michael Godsall

Choreographed by Emily Kent

Dancers

Emily Kent

Louise Palin

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Soundscape by Michelle Duxbury

Videography by Michael Godsall

Choreographed by Abi Sheridan

Dancers

Tess Donaghy
Francis Henry
Lauren King
Kaitlin McNulty
Freya Sheppard

With thanks to MeshDance staff and students:

Katie Aynsley
Karen Bartholomew
Emma Hughes
Melissa Jackson
Roisin Prior
Nakita Russell
Ellie Smith

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Frances Hansom

Mind The Gap
Northern School of Contemporary Dance
The Tetley

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