

EPISODE 2: THE LEAF AND THE SAVIOUR GUY

[00:04 Narrator:]

The Law is a White Dog is a podcast series developed for TULCA Festival of Visual Arts 2020. Made during the global pandemic, the series places artists and artworks in dialogue with lawyers, advocates and activists. As a festival of visual art produced in a time of confinement and restriction for many, the podcast series explores unseen dimensions of the artists' work.

[00:37]

Saoirse Wall is an artist working with moving-image and performance. They try to articulate experiences that lack representation in social narratives of gender, health, and the body.

The piece we are about to hear is titled *The Leaf and the Saviour Guy*. It is developed from the voiceover of their film of the same title, and works creatively with audio description techniques which are usually used to support audiences who are blind or visually-impaired.

This audio recording and the film were developed in different locations, taking inspiration from the thermal springs and healing practices of the French Pyrenees. Structured like a fable, *The Leaf and the Saviour Guy* proposes a reality where water can be used to heal patriarchal arrogance.

[01:28 Saoirse:]

You are walking down a grassy lane.

A title appears in blue hand-drawn gothic font: THE LEAF AND THE SAVIOUR GUY.

[01:51]

A narcissistic character named Saviour Guy who believes himself always to be right is walking along a river, approaching a concrete footbridge.

You are walking along a river, approaching a concrete footbridge.

You stand on the bridge, and look down to the river.

[02:18]

It flows quickly, water cascading over boulders.

Suddenly, the view zooms in to a leaf floating.

Then, water crashing and frothing over a rock.

From a different angle, the whitewater bubbles.

A close-up of the river flowing furiously over large rocks.

A view from directly above, the water is calmer below the cascade.

The view zooms in and out on a group of leaves under the water.

We see the leaves from another angle. The river's surface ripples, distorting the view.

The water rushes rapidly over the large boulders—

You are a leaf floating in the water, looking up at a patch of blue sky surrounded by soft white clouds.

You turn suddenly, underwater now and speeding swiftly along the riverbed.

You come back up out of the water with a splash.

The white-blue sky covers most of the screen.

Trees twist in and out of the frame as you spin down the river.

[03:48]

Saviour Guy appears, a white guy wearing black tracksuit bottoms, black hiking boots, and a grey top.

His head is out of shot.

He puts one foot up on a rock, unties his boot, and removes it and his sock.

He pulls off his tracksuit bottoms.

Saviour Guy has seen some leaves that have fallen into the water, and because he himself would not like to be there, he looks at them disdainfully and decides that they need to be saved, and that he will be the one to do it and therefore he will be a saviour and a hero.

He runs towards the river, and dives under the water.

You dive under and see murky water in front and all around you.

You broach the surface, and dip back under.
Your right hand extends through bubbles formed by your movement in front of you to grab a leaf floating under the surface.
You come back up out of the water holding the leaf in the air.
The sleeve of your grey top is drenched and sticking to your skin.
You scramble out of the water.

[04:53]

A view now of Saviour Guy carefully placing leaves on a large boulder on the riverbank.
A close-up of his fingers stroking the leaves.

[05:11]

You are the leaf, floating down the river.
Trees twist slowly in and out of the frame as you spin in the water
Saviour Guy enters your view from the right hand side, reaches down, and grabs you.
Your view is blocked by the pink skin of his palm.
He carries you to the riverbank, puts you down, wipes the water off you, and stands above you, placing his hands on his hips.
His breasts are visible through his grey top.
He folds his arms.

[05:45]

From above, the camera zooms in and out on the boulder with the leaves laid on top of it.
The camera's exposure is adjusted brighter again and again until the screen is nearly all white.
The leaves are angry —asking why has he disturbed them? They had chosen to be there and were enjoying their time together journeying down the river.
They tell him: apologise, put them back, and learn from this lesson so that in future he should respect the agency of others before presuming he knows what they want

or need.

[06:18]

You are the leaf on the riverbank.

Saviour Guy stands above you with arms folded.

He looks down at you suddenly, hinging at the waist.

He takes what you've said on board, apologises sincerely, puts you back from where he took you.

He puts you back in the river.

His hands gesture apologetically.

Droplets of water fall from his fingers onto you.

[06:47]

You are Saviour Guy, looking at the leaves on the boulder on the riverbank.

Your hands in front of you gesture apologetically.

You carry a brown leaf to the water and place it gently in.

You put another in the water and nudge it along.

Your feet are visible standing in the water below you.

You wriggle the fingers of your left hand to shake off some water.

You carry a large orange leaf in your palm from the boulder and put it into the river.

[07:20]

You are the leaf in the river.

Saviour Guy standing above you gestures apologetically.

Droplets of water splash on you.

He picks you up and drops you in the water with a splash.

Water covers your vision briefly.

You twist to face the orange-leafed tree.

You float downstream.

The tree moves around your field of vision as you twist in the water, still facing upwards towards the sky.

You dip partially under and out of the water as you continue your journey down the

river.

The tree-lined horizon appears on your right.

[08:01]

You are Saviour Guy, standing on a grassy riverbank.

Your right and left arms enter and exit the frame on either side of the screen, dancing in front of you.

You are so grateful to have had this transformative interaction that you dance a dance of joy and appreciation for having learnt a lesson from the leaves.

You punch the air in front of you with alternating fists.

You wave goodbye to leaves floating on the river.

You move both arms forward, palms up again in a gesture of gratitude.

You march along the riverbank.

Your hands in fists swing in front of you

You do a 360 degree turn.

Your arms wave out in front.

Your right leg kicks up with toes pointed.

Once more, and then your left leg.

Your right knee lifts up into the frame.

You crouch down low to the grass.

You wiggle your arms.

You move both arms in unison, in and out from your chest

You twist while moving arms and legs, punching, waving and slicing through the air.

You wiggle your hands in front of your face and then put them down.

You walk along the riverbank,

so grateful to have had this transformative interaction

and for having learnt a lesson from the leaves.

[10:00 Narrator:]

The Law is a White Dog podcast series was commissioned by TULCA Festival of Visual Arts curated in 2020 by Sarah Browne

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