

crop circle (a spell)

gathered here
amidst the green
we bear witness
with our tongues
from a circle as cyclical as time
we fashion an exit
two hands in the soil
working from the root.

dawn into dusk
sun wake until sun sleep
we bear witness to the years
unchained yet unfree
master just a boss now, a big man
no change other than in name
master earns his salt from the
sweat of our brows
sugar still sweet money oh
sugarcane still sorrow
profit upon profit there
but dust to dust here.
to this we bear witness
with our tongues
to clear a path
outwards –

*‘and all the trees of the field
shall clap their hands’*

let the earth declare
what our bodies have borne
weights such as none should carry.

two hands in the soil
each & each of us
gathered here in preparation
to reap a different crop

that we might eat
that we might live
that we might play

that we might sleep
a sleep of dreams
not weariness.
we gather here
bending towards life
like crops towards daylight

shoulder to shoulder
to this end
we fashion our exit
two hands in the earth
we unpick each stitch
of this wicked tapestry
to form a more worthy garment
or none at all.

'And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands' is taken from Isaiah 55:12

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Commissioned by Cinenova for The Work We Share as a response to Sweet Sugar Rage by Sistren Theatre Collective (1985).

The Work We Share is an international public programme of newly digitised films from the Cinenova collection addressing representations of gender, race, sexuality, health and community. The films are captioned by Collective Text, and supported by response commissions from contemporary artists and writers.

The Work We Share gathers a number of films which previously existed in precarious conditions; in some cases, with negatives being lost or distribution film prints being the only copy. This programme intends to acknowledge our interdependency: from organisation, to filmmakers, cultural workers, communities, and individuals. How can we acknowledge our interdependent relationships? How can we recognise our place in a network of communications, relationships and resources, particularly as an un-funded volunteer organisation? What different strains of labour does our work rely on? How do we sustain this work mutually?

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