UP
PROJECTS

Public—
Art—
Network

'Under My Skin,' Imran Perretta X Rising Arts Agency X Integrate UK, commissioned by Spike Island.

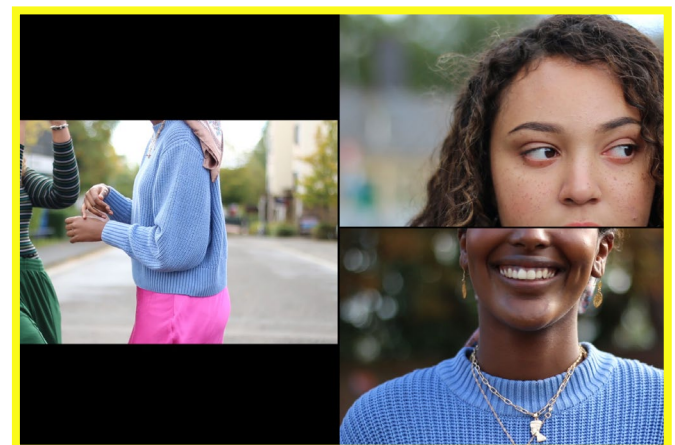Workshops throughout November 2019, culminating in a film screening on 28th November 2019

Under My Skin, Rising Arts Agency, 2019

WHAT

[Under My Skin](#) was a collaboration between Spike Island, Rising Arts Agency, and Integrate UK in response to Imran Perretta's *The Destructors*, a film reflecting upon the artist's experience growing up as Bangladeshi Muslim man in East London. Eleven young artists from Bristol were invited to take part in a series of conversational and film-focused workshops led by Rising and Integrate, exploring the identity and marginalisation present in Perretta's exhibition. Through the workshops, the participating artists explored their own personal testimonies and developed filmmaking skills, resulting in the co-produced three-part film *Under My Skin* which was presented at Spike Island.

Under My Skin comprises intimate insights into the participating artists' personal experiences, generated through spoken and visual poetry, and engaging with ideas of vulnerability and self love. The film has a strong focus on the identity of young women as a counterpoint to Perretta's *The Destructors*, which looks at the figure of the alienated male.

Under My Skin (Film Still), Rising Arts Agency, 2019

ARTISTS

Eleven Bristol-based artists aged 16-30: Amaal Ali, Abbi Bayliss, Kiara Corales, Alba Diaz Gracie, Sakiya Ghalib, Ifrah Hassan, Maya Ilogu, Asmaa Jama, Angela Jones, Saili Katebe, Courtenay Welcome. With support from filmmaker Mikael Techane.

WHO

The project was commissioned by Spike Island and produced by Roseanna Dias, Executive Producer at Rising, and Shamil Ahmed, Project Worker at Integrate UK, and its workshops were supported by the artist Imran Perretta.

Based in Bristol, Spike Island is an international centre for the production, exhibition and discussion of contemporary art and design, home to a gallery, café and creative workspace.

Rising Arts Agency is a community of young creatives aged 16–30 mobilising others for radical social, political and cultural change.

Integrate UK is a youth-led, Bristol-based charity campaigning for gender and racial equality, and community cohesion.

Imran Perretta is an artist who lives and works in London. Encompassing moving-image, sound, performance and poetry, Perretta's work explores ideas of biopower, marginality and the (de)construction of cultural histories.

WHERE

Project workshops happened across Integrate and Spike Island space, with the final exhibition hosted by Spike Island in Bristol.

WHY

Instigated by Imran Perretta's *The Destructors* which presents the complexities of coming of age for young Muslim men in the UK, the project allowed participants to reflect upon their own experiences of marginalisation and their sense of identity,

and to integrate these into an artwork presented in an esteemed exhibition space. Produced by young people of diverse backgrounds aged 16-30, this highlighted the urgent need to diversify the representation of lived experience in UK arts and culture.

HOW

The project was commissioned and funded by Spike Island with Rising Arts Agency and Integrate given free reign to work with their communities of artists and activists in ways that they've developed over a long time. For Rising Arts Agency, *Under My Skin* as a project was possible due to a previous project called *Whose Culture?* which fostered relationships and support for creatives of colour both on and offline, starting in 2018.

IMPACT

- Peer-to-peer learning and collaboration through workshops
- Artist development in digital filmmaking skills and commission co-creation
- Exposure for two not-for-profit organisations working to challenge inequality in the UK, inside Spike Island gallery space

"The collapsing of the artist-participant divide in this project was an empowering and unusual opportunity, and at Rising we are always thinking about how to nurture community connection and flatten the hierarchies we come across."

- ROSEANNA DIAS