



Department of Visual Arts
The University of Chicago

The Root & The Bloom—Where Could We Go: A Map of Finding Home



Still from "The Bloom"

Friday, February 24, 7PM

Logan Center for the Arts, Screening Room 201

"The Root & The Bloom: Where Could We Go—A Map of Finding Home"

Please join us for a film screening with artists and filmmakers Echaka Agba and Kristina Valada-Viars followed by a conversation with CMS faculty and DoVA alumni, Marco Ferrari.

The two films by Echaka Agba and Kristina Valada-Viars seek and dream a home that prioritizes Black and Queer Liberation. *The Root: Looking for Ancestors in My Father's Garden (Coordinate 1)* is a meditation on family meant to begin ongoing conversations outside of the details of daily life. Agba and

Valada-Viars, partners in life and creativity, travel from their home in Chicago to Agba's family home for a series of conversations around the concept of home with the elder members of their family now living in the American Midwest. Seeking information about relatives she never met, in a series of family gatherings and formal conversations in the summer of 2020, Echaka asks the adults who raised her about memories, values, and challenges in their path from Nigeria to the home they have built in rural Indiana. Part road trip and part experimental personal narrative, *The Bloom (Coordinate 2)* invites the audience to explore the meaning of home alongside the filmmakers and their family. (2020-21, USA, 40 min., digital video)

Echaka Agba (she/her) is an award-winning theatre, film, and television and teaching artist based in New York and Chicago. She has performed on various stages in Chicago including Steppenwolf Theater Company, Goodman Theater, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Theatre Wit and Writers Theater. She has appeared on several network and cable programs including *Work In Progress*, *The Chi*, and *Chicago Med*. Echaka is a member of the Mezcla Media Collective and the Sundance Collab Institute having studied under Rebecca Murga and a graduate of The School At Steppenwolf and Black Box Acting Academy.

Kristina Valada-Viars (she/they) is an independent artist working to foster artist-led community exchange. Her self-produced mini-short, *A Different Time*, was a selection for WickedQueer (2021, Boston). She served as performance director for *Reach+You*, an interactive app-based serial performance created by Katrina and Jonah Goldsaito (Tribeca Festival Immersive Main Competition, 2022). Her narrative podcast teleplay, *Jane: 1891*, about Jane Addams Hull House, assimilation, and the opening of the Butler Art Gallery, was commissioned by Make Believe Association where she is currently a member of a seven-person writing team for a new serial narrative podcast, *Lake Song* (Tribeca Audio Premieres, October 2022). Her short screenplay, *2 Spruce Street*, was an official selection of the Scario Film Festival.

Presented by the Film Studies Center with support from the Open Practice Committee in the Department of Visual Arts

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Division of the Humanities

Reva and David Logan Center for the Arts
915 East 60th Street, Suite 236, Chicago, IL 60637



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Email the DoVA Office at dova@uchicago.edu

Phone (773) 753-4821

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