

Making it **HOME**





“Making it Home” began with two ideas. Firstly, we wanted to foster lasting connections of dialogue and understanding between two very different groups of people who would not ordinarily meet. Secondly, we wanted to use poetry and short film as powerful tools in building those connections. These ideas also coincided with two of the Refugee Survival Trust’s aims: raising awareness of issues affecting refugees and asylum seekers, and promoting lasting integration in Scotland.

And so, thanks to enthusiastic partners and funding from Creative Scotland, it all came together. In September 2012 refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant women in Glasgow and local women in Edinburgh took part in parallel poetry workshops discussing published poems about “Home”. This was chosen as the theme most likely to uncover shared experiences. Participants explored the personal reflections and stories prompted by the poems, and then these very talented women learned how to make short films, based on the rich material gathered during the poetry workshops. Now, in June 2013, we have four extraordinary films ready to be shared with audiences in Scotland and beyond.

“Making it Home” has met and exceeded its original aims. This is in huge part due to the resilience, talent and sheer determination of the two groups of participants. These women have formed lasting bonds of friendship and respect, moving beyond initial doubts to discover shared experiences and understanding on issues such as homelessness, destitution, disempowerment and the need for sanctuary. Individually, participants have learned and consolidated skills of communication, analysis, teamwork and creatively expressing their thoughts – skills that will enrich their wider communities and individual prospects far beyond the nine months’ duration of the project.

This booklet seeks to chart the project’s journey. It also celebrates the women who have expressed one truth through different stories: we are all of us, daily, trying to make it home through difficulties to a place of sanctuary.

Esa Aldegheri
PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR

media co-op

From the outset media co-op was really delighted to be a part of such a creative and original project as “Making It Home”. We love the idea of bringing film-making to people who’ve never tried it before.

At our first meetings with the Glasgow and Edinburgh groups, we were immediately struck by the supportive atmosphere that had been built up by their workshops with the poets Claire and Jane. It was a real treat to embark on the video stage of “Making it Home” on such firm foundations.

We’d lined up an ambitious and action-packed programme to introduce the women to different film-making techniques, and to the difficult process of transforming their response to a poem into a film. Everyone rose to the challenge. The level of the participants’ commitment and dedication throughout the entire project was fantastic. All the teams faced moments of doubt, uncertainty or downright terror, but determination and mutual support pulled them through in every case. At first, the women were surprised when their suggestions and ideas for the films were received so positively by the rest of their teams. As they went on, we saw their confidence grow, which was an inspiration for us as film facilitators. However shy they were at the start, each woman brought a wealth of creativity and deep thought to the film development and production progress.



“we’re looking forward to the journeys their films make out into the world”

Their expectations were exceeded - and ours too. Every person who took part should be extremely proud of themselves.

From a more personal perspective, we would like to add how much we have enjoyed being part of “Making It Home”. We are very grateful for being given the opportunity to meet and work with so many interesting, caring, funny and creative women, and witness their journey from complete beginners to real film-makers. Now we’re looking forward to the journeys their films make out into the world.

*Viltė Vaitkute, Catherine Weir
& Lucinda Broadbent*
media co-op

Making it home without you

Looking back on my life’s screen at my precious sister Sheri, with her great presence in family and public, with dad’s strength and intellect along with mum’s patience and moral compass... Standing in Kosovo chamber speaking without notes. I still find it hard to believe she lost the battle, she is gone. Here I am in GLASGOW, far away from my homeland looking forward to the future, making it home without you, treasuring my memories, and being forever with you...

*'Home
I met ~~met~~ Nese ~~with~~
on project*

*I am
blessed with the gift ^{to have the}
pleasure to meet and ^{know} ~~know~~ ^{you} ~~you~~*

*Caring and thoughtful
the support you get from everyone
in the group.*

How how rich are we!!!

*Everyone you meet is an opportunity
to grow.*

*The project, including the women
I have met, has benefited me
in ways I can hardly describe.*

A communal poem by Women Supporting Women, Pilton, overlaid with a poem by Rema, Development Co-ordinator at the Maryhill Integration Network.

Map of Me: 1

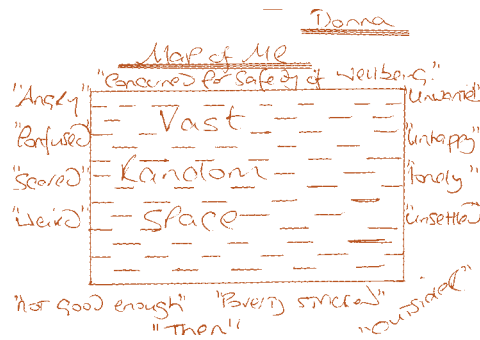
Following the birth of my daughter, I was diagnosed with post-natal depression when she was eight months old.

During the next two years, I was put on medication and attended regular GP and hospital visits, however, nothing was working.

Eventually, I contacted Pilton Community Health Project (PCHP), hoping that they could provide the necessary help and support I desperately needed. And so began my journey with PCHP. Initially I worked purely with my personal counsellor, which proved to be a long and sometimes difficult process.

As time went on, other members of staff also began to play a part in my recovery. Thanks to their fantastic work, I can finally say:

"I did it - I conquered this terrible illness."

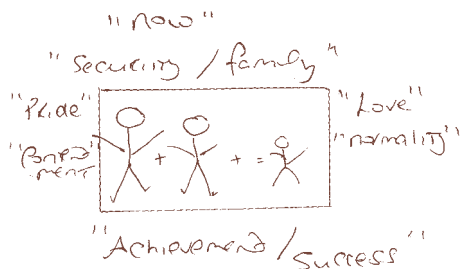


Map of Me: 2

The whole experience completely turned my life around, making me a stronger and more positive person.

As a result, I got involved with this fantastic project, "Making It Home." Doing this is a once in a lifetime opportunity and an experience I will never forget. In fact, it's fair to say it has changed my life. Yes, it has been an emotional rollercoaster, however the benefits have been far reaching, helping me in my day to day life, in particular my relationship with my husband and daughter.

To try to provide a better understanding of what the project has done for me, please have a look at "The Map of Me." Personally, I think it speaks for itself.



Shamaila and Aqsa

A pregnant woman who has been thrown out on the street by a cruel husband carries the stigma of divorce and has nowhere to go.

But she has one hope...She will give birth to her baby soon. The feeling of being a mother has made her strong enough to face the cruel world.

As she gives birth to her little angel, the meaning of life changes for her forever.

A new mother dedicates her life to her daughter. A deprived woman becomes a strong mother. She is ready to face any challenge in order to keep her baby safe and happy.

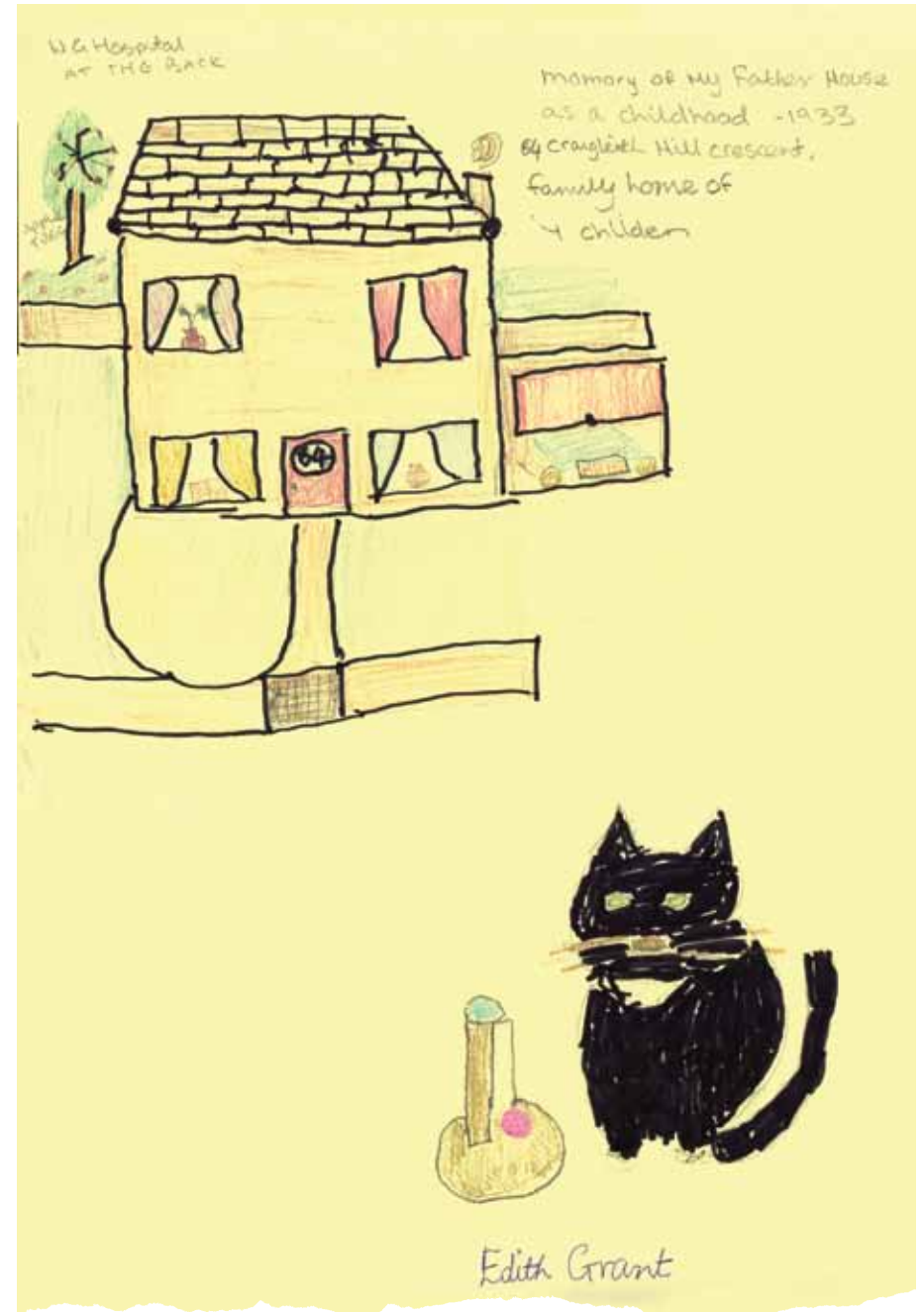
She goes through a lot in her new journey...

But after 11 years, she is an independent mother, the wee girl is 10 years old - and she is extraordinary.



My Mirror

Wiping you from the dust.
Beautiful women, soft and strong.
I love you because you are my mother, my sister, myself, my home.
Away from you, away from my home.
Tears dripping on you.
See my childhood, my days, and my roots.
Forgive me because I left you.
I am becoming like you.
A mother, sister, a home.
Thank you for giving me so much love.





Peter Piper

a poem of my childhood

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
A peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked.
If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers,
Where's the peck of pickled peppers that Peter Piper picked?

Memories about my father

born December 1925

My father was educated as a teacher, he taught at Waddilove Institution. I am proud to say he was very intelligent and he was a famous preacher. He had many converts who, on my father's death, spoke about his good works and Christianity. I am thankful because my father managed to educate all of his seven children. He died a pensioner and left a 25-acre plot. I am not ashamed to say my father was a hero loved by the people.

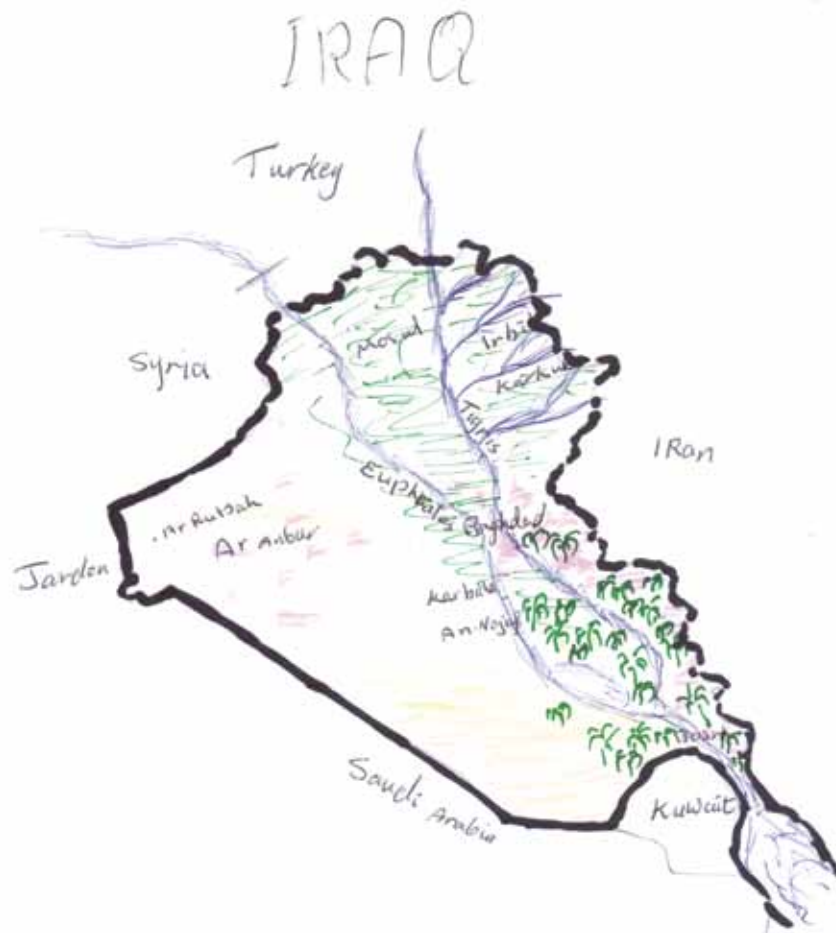
My name is Mhurai Dzingisai

I come from Zimbabwe. I was born in Masvingo province, my home is in the countryside of Chivi, and I miss my hut and the wood we used for making fire to cook and to warm the hut also. I like food cooked over firewood. When my granny used to cook, I really enjoyed that food!

I miss this so much; I miss my home more than anything else. Home is best. You can go North South East West but home is best. That's why I miss everything about my home.



When I look at the map of Iraq, I feel that the Tigris and Euphrates are not rivers but huge wounds cutting Iraq from the north to the south. I hope one day I'll go to my homeland to kiss the soil mixed with blood, the wounds of innocent people, the graves of those killed without any reason. But it's a fact nothing will stay forever. Believe in God. TRUST HIM.



When I was out with my son one day my son said let's go in here, and we will see what they have, as I was very low with depression. We found out there was counselling and a new project was starting to do with home. Since I joined last October I have come quite far learning new things like poetry and filming and meeting new people from other countries. It has built up my confidence and through it I have made new friends. I never used to go out but I am a different person now and I know the project has helped as I had knee surgery and got support from everybody in the group. Now I have good news, my daughter gets married on the 29th June and I am going to be a granny on 24th September.





art

ere

Story Arcs

Production

I love you

School



Time to go
Kids go to

Chaffinch Map of Scotland

by Edwin Morgan

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brichtie

Jane and MIN: Edwin Morgan's exquisite Chaffinch map, where different dialect names for a Chaffinch are grafted onto a map of Scotland, led us to think about the birdsong of different countries: Ghana, Algeria, Poland, Iraq, Kosovo, Kenya, Mozambique and Italy. Imagine the songs of all those birds...

Claire and WSW: The shape of this poem really resonated with us. We talked about all the forms a poem can take, how poems can be unexpected and surprising, fun and playful. Although initially daunting, the map drew out ideas about nationhood and identity. One woman said, "I feel like that poem belongs to me."



Handmade card from the women at WSW to the women at MIN expressing friendship and solidarity.

No. 115 dreams

The living room remembers Gran dancing to Count Basie.
The kitchen can still hear my aunts fighting on Christmas day.
The hall is worried about the loose banister.
The small room is troubled by the missing hamster.
The toilet particularly dislikes my Grandfather.
The wallpaper covers up for the whole family.

And No. 115 dreams of lovely houses by the sea.
And No. 115 dreams of one night in the country.

The stairs are keeping schtum about the broken window.
The toilet's sick of the trapped pipes squealing so.
The walls aren't thick enough for all the screaming.
My parents' bedroom has a bed in a choppy sea.
My own bedroom loves the bones of me.
My brother's bedroom needs a different boy.

And No. 115 dreams of yellow light, an attic room.
And No. 115 dreams of a chimney, a new red roof.

And the red roof dreams of robin redbreasts
tap dancing on the red dance floor in the open air.

Jackie Kay

from *The Thing that Mattered Most*
Black & White / Scottish Poetry Library, 2006

Jane and MIN: The humour and exuberance of Jackie Kay's personified house touched us in a very direct way, and we spent a little time writing about houses we have lived in, and even our ideal houses. One white and gold palace of a house was conjured up, but we all agreed that a physical house is less important than who we share it with.

Claire at WSW: We loved the personification in this piece, and talked about the ways we personify things in our own lives: Ruby the car, Peggy the bike, Cheeky and Henry the cats (or honorary "babies")! We talked about what our houses might dream of if they were people: open doors, clear boundaries, peace and quiet, security. We also discussed the ways in which 'home' is so much more than just four walls... it's something you create inside yourself.

Choice

Digging a bush up, pitching in
to damp earth, getting out
clutch-arms and fingertip veins

as easily broken as silk
I look into the mica eye
of a robin. This is what we say

we all want. The choice –
to go, to stay. But how does a robin
decide? How does anyone?

Ruth Padel

from *The Mara Crossing*, Chatto & Windus, 2012

Jane and MIN: How does a robin decide? Ruth Padel's pared and eloquent poem resonated with the experiences of so many of the women at MIN. Some refugees have no choice but to flee under threat of death. Others choose to fight for their family's future in another country because the consequences of staying are unbearable. We wondered if there is any choice for refugees and asylum-seekers; and, when someone leaves their home country, how much is left behind? For one woman, loss is associated with the fragrance of over sixty rose bushes in the garden of her childhood home.

Claire and WSW: In this session the poetry handouts were snatched up like they were plates of delicious cake – poetry had become a treat, not a chore. We filled pages and pages on the flipchart with our thoughts on this one: thoughts about putting down our roots, finding nourishment, and taking flight.

I am becoming my mother

Yellow/brown woman
fingers smelling always of onions

My mother raises rare blooms
and waters them with tea
her birth waters sang like rivers
my mother is now me

My mother had a linen dress
the colour of the sky
and stored lace and damask
tablecloths
to pull shame out of her eye.

I am becoming my mother
brown/yellow woman
fingers smelling always of onions.

Lorna Goodison

from *I am Becoming My Mother*,
New Beacon Books Ltd, 1986

Jane and MIN: How we all become our mothers! Lorna Goodison's poem 'I am becoming my mother' was a favourite of ours, with its gorgeous sensual imagery, its delicate allusions to mixed ethnicity. We all noticed how the way we view our parents shifts as we grow up to assume our own responsibilities. All the mothers at MIN took this poem to heart, but we didn't ignore fathers and a couple of women recalled singular acts of generosity and courage on the parts of their dads.

Claire and WSW: A tricky week for us. We talked about how difficult it can be to be a mum... but also how difficult it can be to have a mum. We shared our riches - and found that the things that make us feel really rich have nothing to do with money. One participant said, "I never really got it before, but now I understand what Women Supporting Women really means."

The shortest and sweetest of songs

Come Home.

George MacDonald

from *The Poetical Works of George MacDonald*, 1893

Jane and MIN: Come home. It is fitting to end with this plaintive shortest and sweetest of songs. We translated George MacDonald's words in many different languages on a flipchart, and finally revisited all the associations we had as a group with poetry: truth, hope, songs, catharsis, complexity and richness, honesty, peace and war, sadness and loss, emotions, soul, relief, life experiences, friendship, expression of feelings as a refugee.

Claire at WSW: We mused on what it means to come home to yourself, to find peace and acceptance. Like the Glasgow women, we also revisited our ideas about poetry, and found them to have changed radically since the first session. Where we had written "snobby" and "difficult," we now wrote "energy" and "inspiring."



Handmade card from the women at MIN to the women at WSW expressing friendship and solidarity.



Skelly

An opportunity arrives in A4 with the familiar letterbox clang

Calls itself "HOME"

So blatant and assertive

It stirs me and I know

NO...can't work Wednesdays

Creating, breathing fresh on project new

Sit, sit some more

Sit in the words of others

Their movement palpable

Skin and bare bones

illuminating freedom

Cells renewing on site

Same old stories and pathologies

Abating

Lens is open

Newfound language in frame

Rolling so spiritually on your own now

Somebody shouts "ACTION"

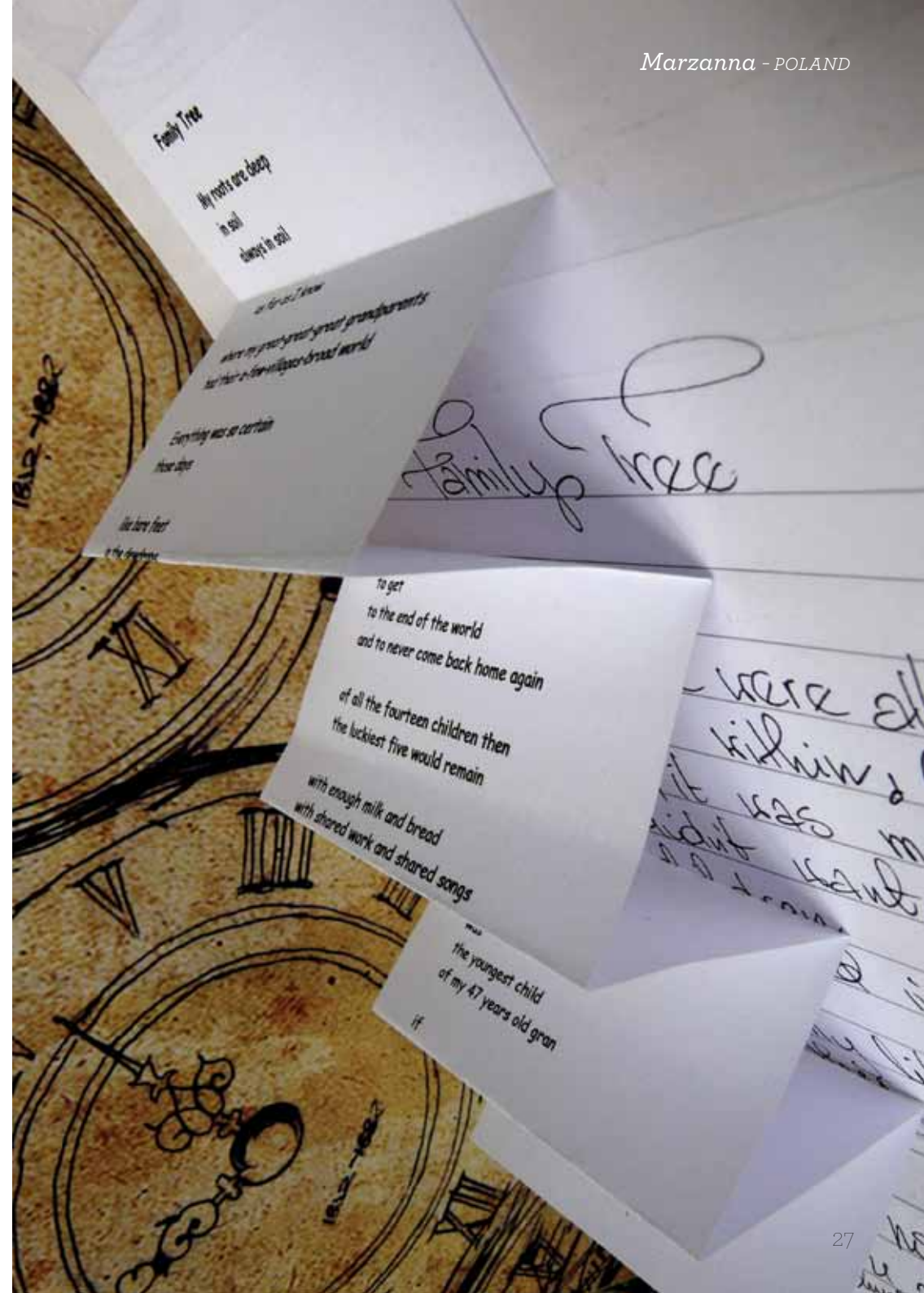
It was you

Call it the wide shot

....didn't you know friends

Freedom is an inside job

Come home



Cnoc Ninidh dreams

My floor is warm wood now
Modern children play in bright light
The light goes out
Each night I dream

1890
I feel young and bright and smell of new wood
Trees sigh and rustle, horses snuffle, the stream rushes on
I sense a pride in two men and one woman
They talk of health and change and children

1899
I hear screams of pain, of relief, of joy
A new Brigid is born upstairs
A man and four children come up to peep
They kneel and think on last year's loss

1940
My rooms are full of local people streaming past a coffin
Sadness mingled with prayer fills the air
They say she had a good life - I think she did
She leaves a woman-shaped space for my mother

1953
I sense a restless girl who cannot sleep
She presses herself into my cool wall
Daytime and I'm still dark
They say she has measles

1954
An old man is leaving
He built me and grew me and is sad and glad together
Fresh notches on the newel post
New grandchildren need his house

2010
My rooms are full of people
From Dubai, Glasgow, Manchester, Australia
Weeping envelops my every nook and cranny
A young man's coffin is manoeuvred out

122 years of family stories
Joy and secrets, sadness shared
So much homework, so many excuses
Jumble up in my dreams

Edinburgh

A big giant brute of a man,
Shoulders of tall dark buildings
on either side shadowing the
road from the sun.

A grey storm brow with a
bellowing voice, pushing with a
tartan prod along the scar of
its body stapled together with
moving traffic.

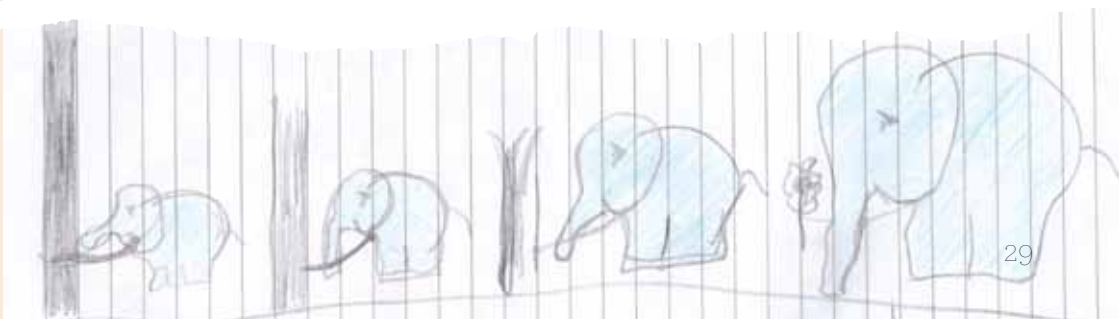
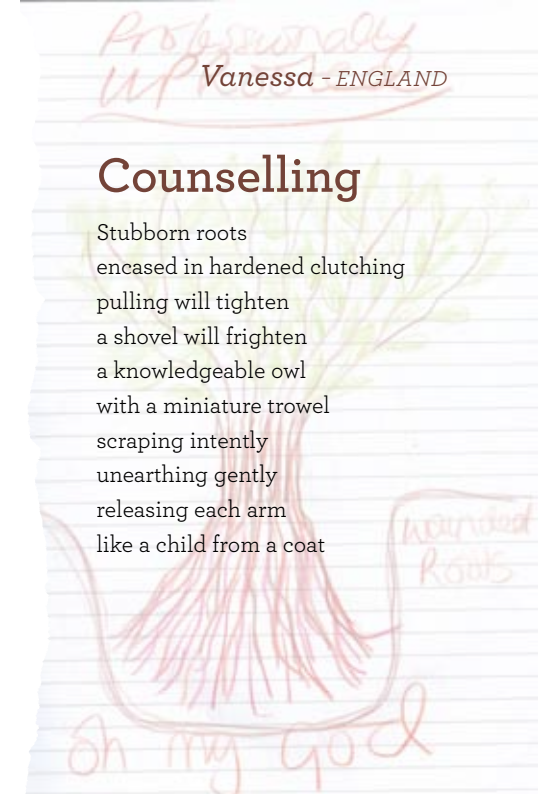
Big fists of churches on every
corner, angry eyes of clocks
sounding time to be devoured
and gorged into a stomach of
fury and fright.

Pavements of feet squash
another world beneath, with
arms of trains flush out the
unwanted, whilst bringing in new
feed to keep hunger at bay.

A carbuncle castle, like a
deformed mole, sits above a
scarred and cragged mouth,
roaring fe fi fo fum, I smell the
blood of an Englishman.

Counselling

Stubborn roots
encased in hardened clutching
pulling will tighten
a shovel will frighten
a knowledgeable owl
with a miniature trowel
scraping intently
unearthing gently
releasing each arm
like a child from a coat



As the time goes by

Where oh where would I be without u guiding me? You are my world
half of my soul, loving u from my heart is the truth be told.

When I wake up in the morning with the four noisy voices in their own special way,
that's why I love waking up every single day.

As a clock time never stays still, there is not enough time for what needs to be done.

I am so blessed for to be a mum, happy, healthy, each and every one.

I tell myself you're doing good, even when I want to scream from the roof.

I love my life, young and free, and so happy to be me.

Come home

Home for me is where it was warm, happy, full of fun.

Laughter is the sound of my house when I was young.

My brother for me is my friend, my helper,

is so special to me, and he is number one,
giggles in the summer, winter, spring and autumn.

We're even better. My life growing up was the best ever,

having my mum, dad and brother is my life in one.

I love my family, it's been so much fun,

growing up as a child was the best and so much fun.

Home to me is where I escape.

It's the best feeling ever to know you can come home.



With God all things are possible





Mother

Who is a mother?

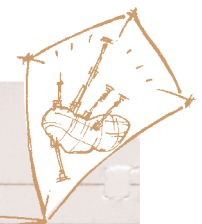
Someone who always looks after her children and feels happy when she sees a smile on their faces, who keeps an eye on them the whole night and wants them to sleep peacefully.

Someone who can go hungry but can never see her children hungry. Her eyes will always be on the door until her children come home.

I believe that anyone who has got the hands of a mother to support them, to pray for them, will always get over problems and difficulties.

My mum is behind all my successes. As a mum, I feel the same about my kids, and salute all the great mums of the world.

The Sound Of The Pipes



My ears have picked up a faint
Sound in the distance
My body starts getting excited
Adrenaline starts pumping like
fire in my veins
to the sound that's exciting me
Saying sorry as I rush through the
crowd,
I'm barely walking as my feet
hardly touch the ground
Cause I feel like I'm floating on the
Sound,
like a kite on the wind
the music lifts me
the pipes and drums fill my ears
and my heart with pride and
passion for this land I call home!

"I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I have cherished the idea of a domestic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and achieve. But if need be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

Nelson Mandela

My mother and myself

My mother is my inspiration, she was the firstborn of three siblings – a brother and sister – my mother and her sister are already dead; my uncle is in his 90s. My parents had seven children: three boys and four girls. The boys were older than the girls, and I am the oldest of the girls.

My mother always used to tell us, especially me, to follow our footsteps. She was a very happy person, kind to everybody, and always liked to help people, even strangers. Our home is near a hospital. Every evening, my mother used to go to the hospital to teach people who are stranded, and to bring them home to give them food and somewhere to sleep. She always said to us: do not mistreat anybody even if you don't know them. You don't know – tomorrow it might be you needing help. Wherever you go, be friendly and the people will welcome you.

When I was coming to the UK, my mother told me to practice what she has told me. She said I would never regret it. I've made many friends and they have helped me and treated me like a daughter or mother or sister. For seven years living in destitution I have never regretted being here. God bless the people of Scotland.



Catalogue of my grandmother's sayings

A bloody good hiding
Another egg chipped
Bent as a nine-bob note
Blood and sand
Blood and stomach pills
Broad as it's long
Brought up in the bottle and seen nowt but the cork
Could ride bare-arsed to London on them scissors
Could've written slut in the dust in that house
Dogs in the same street bark alike
Good clip under the lug's what he needs
Like a blue-arsed fly
Ninepence to the shilling
Not as green as he's cabbage-looking
Only fools and asses
Only mad dogs and Englishmen
Queer as Dick's hatband
Six of one and half a dozen of the other
Twined as a bag of weasels
Well go to the foot of our stairs
Well our Helen Amy Judith Sarah
Christine Jeanie Claire
What a right bag of washing
You want nowt with that I tell you
You want nowt with that

Hawthorn Queen

It was one of those last swarms,
a blood-red immolation of ladybirds
so thick
the air appeared pixellated.

Traffic stopped.

My mother grasped my hand, and together
we picked a path across hot tarmac
decorated with appliqué wing-cases.
They buckled like molten plastic, stuck
to the bottom of our sandals –
mottled chitin, black gravel.

I looked up and saw tears on my mother's chin.

Quaking, she led me past the stationary cars,
their engines overheated. All the time
more dazed ladybirds
gathered in her golden hair
as if she guaranteed safe passage
or could halt the insect blizzard.

Looking up, I saw a Hawthorn Queen,
her crown alive with crawling berries.



The Making It Home Project would like to thank...

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The lovely people at The Melting Pot

All the friends and family who've supported the project throughout – you know who you are!

Venues

The Tron, The Filmhouse, The Glasgow Film Theatre, The Scottish Storytelling Centre, North Edinburgh Arts, Summerhall, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh Central Library

Sponsors

And last but not least, our Sponsume donors – this book couldn't have happened without you.

Vicky Adams, Caitrin Armstrong, Helen Askew, John Askew, Rachel Avery, Amy Berg, Anniken Blomberg, Kayleigh Bohan, Margaret Bremner, Kate and Malcolm Buckle, Joyce Changes, Priscilla Chueng-Nainby, Rita Connelly, Hannah Cornish, Leon Crosby, Kathryn Dawson, Christine de Luca, Chris Emslie, Rachel Farrier, Joyce Fegan, Helen Fox, Gavin Francis, Lilias Fraser, Harry Giles, Kate Gould, Jennifer Gray, Joan Hoggan, Alison Hughes, Joanne Hyson, Robert Alan Jamieson, Aurley Keenan, Lindis Kipp, Jenny Lindsay, Michelle Lowe, Ishbel McFarlane, Sharon McFeely, Malcolm McNeill, Sheila MacKay, Karen Matthews, Fi Milligan Rennie, Tony Mulvahill, Mina O'Hara, Ela Paterson, Ramona Peoples, Adam Roberts, Margaret Ross, Toby Ross, Shelley Sclater, Ryan Van Winkle and Stephen Welsh.

Come Home.

What is home? Where is home? Where do I belong?

This book is the story of two groups of inspirational women who, between September 2012 and June 2013 came together in Pilton, Edinburgh, and Maryhill, Glasgow, to read poems, create films and forge friendships. These pages document just some of their responses to ideas about home, family, community, identity, nationhood and belonging.

Find out more at makingithome.net

