

A close-up, artistic photograph of a person's eye, looking slightly to the right. The eye is light-colored, possibly green or grey, with dark eyeliner and mascara. The skin is fair and the overall lighting is soft and warm. The image is the background for the entire page.

# **DreamMakers**

**Edited by Eva Sajovic**

[www.dreammakersuk.com](http://www.dreammakersuk.com)

Films produced by the **DreamMakers**  
available on DVD. For a copy contact:  
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## FOREWORD

*With any youth project comes the temptation to ask questions and then offer answers, to encourage journeys and then draw maps.*

*And so a space was required.*

*A space in which young people could explore identity, community and aspiration free from prescriptive response and cartographic restriction.*

*A space in which external reality could interact with internal desire, the frenetic hour of youthful exuberance with the intermittent flash of silence and solitude.*

*A space in which they could unlock their urban maze and defy the street that refused to call their name.*

*A space known only as a young person's dreams.*

*Dreams are, of course, no more immune from infiltration than any other space. The disparate band of DreamMakers, dancing daily in our minds, delight in the scooping of voices, choices, ideas and imaginings from our every twist and tumble. They use a myriad of tools at their disposal – photography, sound, video and drawing – to go, gather, capture and create.*

*Yet dreams remain that weird and wonderful space that no human can ever tame. A space where all of the above enter in but something below wins out.*

*Hence the experiment. The idea that young people from across the UK – from Roma, Gypsy, Traveller and non-Roma backgrounds – could themselves become a disparate band of DreamMakers. That they could equip themselves with a myriad of skills – photography, sound, video and drawing – to go, gather, capture and create.*

*Because a space was required.*

*Alas, our determination not to answer for young people will not prevent the inevitable from being asked. Why bother? What change ever occurred at the click of a camera or the sharing of a story? Which of the great conundrums of this generation could possibly be confounded by the sketching of a map or the self-directed filmmaking of a young person?*

*The answer is not ours to offer. For too long we have failed to find answers because we have been asking the wrong questions.*

*We have asked why more young people are not politically engaged but have failed to question the democratic deficit inherent in the system we created.*

*We have asked why more young people will not embrace their neighbour but have failed to examine exactly who stands to gain when there is someone else to blame.*

*We have asked why there are not more young people in employment but have failed to consider whose dreams they would be working for.*

*DreamMakers, then, was not only an opportunity for young people but an opportunity for those of us working with them. It was our opportunity to stop asking the wrong questions and simply ask what those questions should be. It was our opportunity to do that which is so unjustifiably demanded of Roma, Gypsy, Traveller and migrant communities the world over. In the words of Ewan MacColl's Moving On Song:*

*Go. Move. Shift.*

*As we moved aside, so DreamMakers emerged. And having gone, gathered, captured and created, the DreamMakers returned. They returned to that space. They returned to their untameable realm, a playground in which reason and passion can daily dance. A playground fizzing with possibility.*

*Come. Now. Enter.*

*Benjamin Williams*



DreamMakers is a UK-wide participatory project supporting young people from marginalised communities, in particular from Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller communities, to develop their powers of self-expression and to view their cultural background as valuable in the context of a multicultural society. These, as well as tackling prejudice in the wider community, are the aims of the project.

DreamMakers has been devised by 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning in collaboration with Eva Sajovic and reflects the objectives of 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning, which is an arts organisation that provides representation for diverse communities and advocates

for change through art. It is funded through Paul Hamlyn Foundation's Social Justice strand.

A steering committee has been established, consisting of representatives from partners from different locations, to create networks (sustainable beyond the lifespan of the project itself), to share experiences and to oversee the processes and outcomes of the project. DreamMakers aims to have an impact on both the micro and macro level: instigating change for individuals, developing a model that might be adopted by others, and empowering individuals to represent their communities in the longer term. The role of the artist is to facilitate each of these processes.

Four locations were selected across the UK: Glasgow, Bolton, Peterborough and London. All have significant new populations of Roma. The geographic spread was designed to establish a network of regional hubs, and to promote understanding of the different issues arising in different environments. In each location a core 'journalistic' team of between six and eleven young people from Roma, English Gypsy, Irish Traveller and non-Roma backgrounds was created (Roma being the majority in all cases).

Each team was given training in media (photography, video, sound and the internet) and assistance in recording and collecting material relevant to their lives and their communities. The project facilitated engagement with individuals from the wider community including other young people, parents, community leaders and organisations. Specific plans were made that related to the activities and issues already inherent in each location, which had been initially identified during preparatory visits.

The work in each location culminated in a celebratory exhibition. The artist spent nine days in each location,

spread over three or four visits, the time divided roughly as follows: three days training ('pre-production'); four days collecting materials ('production'); and two days editing material and preparing the exhibition ('post- production'). A blog featuring participants' work served both as an ongoing virtual display and also as a site of contact between the different groups. The four groups came together for the opening of the final exhibition at 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning in June 2013. Two representatives from each group were invited to 198 to co-curate the exhibition.

A programme of events designed around themes of multicultural identity and the role of art in facilitating representation brought together organisations, academics and other practitioners to share in the vision of future for these communities.

#### NOTE

The Introduction and the section on Methodology first appeared as part of the article "DreamMakers" published in *engage* 32 (spring 2013).

**THE WORK**

## IDENTITY

There is a danger that a focus on issues of identity can raise barriers if it encourages a polarisation of 'them' and 'us'. DreamMakers works within a multicultural philosophy that regards an individual's self-conscious identity as a resource, enabling the individual to negotiate his or her position with the outside world.

As Homi Bhabha describes it, identity is 'neither a new horizon, nor a leaving behind of the past', but 'the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion' and 'an in-between space'.

Be Who you are  
But don't be  
Asked Who to be.

## REFERENCE

Bhabha, H. (2004), The Location of Culture,  
London: Routledge









*“Hello my name is Ernest Tula. I come from Czech Republic and I moved to England cause I had an opportunity to have a better life so when we moved there my life changed a lot better than in Czech Republic. And the day when we moved I had this feeling that I will have lots of friends outside and I did it was amazing. I like England better than Czech Republic. And then when I had friends we hangout with them and mess about but meanwhile I saw these men or guys doing free running which I call it parkour! It was actually really cool how they do it so I try it and it was so easy to do it I also do it with my mates and also people thought me how to do back flips like back flips of the wall just*

*like back flips of anything. So I try it and try it and it worked it was amazing how I did it I learned it like a flicking your hands just like that wow! But I also learned that nothing can stop you having friends between your life and it was school the day when I went to England I went school straight away and had lots of friends and also I was invited to DreamMakers I dunno what it was but I find it really cool because we were like learning about how to take proper proper cool photos and miss also taught us how to use shutter speed. Then on the DreamMakers project we were having an exhibition that two of us or one of us will be allowed to perform their project. It looks quite cool.”*



*"The way you look might explain why you look like it."*









*"If you come, I will take you to my favourite shops. After, we go have a cup of tea. Then we go to my Mum's, my Dad's, my family. Then you come talk to them. I would also take you to meet my Grandmum. If you could meet my Grandfather, he will teach you so many stuff. Like buildings and houses. He used to build them in Slovakia. He has died now. I miss him – he was my favourite."*



*"I would like to go to London.  
My other Grandmum is there.  
I've been to London and the  
London Eye. You can see it all.  
Too much cheap there.*

*I would tell people I make  
cakes, I'm a good girl and I  
like to help people.*

*I miss my friends and cousins.  
When I was in Slovakia this  
year I was crying when I was  
coming back. I didn't want to.  
All my cousins were crying. It  
was hot, then we all started to  
cry and it started to rain."*



*"Progress is impossible  
without change.*

*Those who  
cannot change their minds  
cannot change anything.*

*Don't be ashamed of  
who you are."*



What languages do you speak and why is it important to speak those languages?

*Sometimes we speak Romanes, sometimes we speak English and if we go to our country we will speak Slovak.*

What would it be like if I forgot to speak the language? Would it be difficult for you?

*Yes it would be hard. It would be hard because you don't know how to speak Slovakian properly. You just know how to speak English and Romanes because you were five years old when we came and you started primary school here.*

Do you feel this is your home or is Slovakia still your home?

*I have still got family in Slovakia so I still want to go but this is our home.*

What makes it home?

*This is like our second home. This is where we have school and work.*





*“Hello my name is Ewelina. I’ve got 15 years. I born in Poland. I know four languages, Polish, English, Slovakian and Gypsy. I’ve got 5 brothers and 8 sisters. In the future I would like to be a hairdresser. After school I like to go out with my friends to the park and take care of my cousins.*

*I would like to go back to Poland because I’ve got family and friends there. But my parents don’t agree with it. They want to stay here because here is a better life. To Poland we are going every Christmas and summer holidays and it’s very cool because I’m meeting with my family and friends. We are going to the park, we are taking pictures and we are playing hide and seek.”*







*"My friend is from Pakistan and he's got one brother and one sister. And he's very good. He sometimes comes to my house. And my Mum sometimes makes us chips...and sometimes burger. Sometimes it's cold and that's why he comes into my house – sometimes playing the computer. He's got a computer as well and we're playing a Moviestar game. I play Moviestar with my brother as well. It's my favourite. You have to do a good thing and they give you money – not real."*





"Maybe you don't know Glasgow and sometimes maybe you have to ask 'where's that road?...do you know that road?' And sometimes you have an old man. He's very good. But somewhere is good and somewhere is bad. You have to ask and he said 'that one – that one is your street.'

My favourite thing is see like my house is there and you have to go maybe one, two minutes to the park. I like that. Govanhill Park. But sometimes I'm not going to Govanhill Park, I'm going to Queen's Park because Queen's Park is good, it's very big. It has a small river, some ducks come in there and small, small fish. And you know a bird is coming. And sometimes I go to the park on a sunny day. Like today is a sunny day. I go always. If it's wet and cold I go to my friend's house. Not far away. Sometimes I go to the park with my Mum, Dad, my whole family. And my friend. My brother's friend. I got two brothers and one sister. My sister is older and after is me and after me is my brother and my small brother.

Some of the other boys in Govanhill Park never give me the football. One kicked my leg. I don't know why. I'm always coming with my brother, my friend. That's why. He said go away, that's not yours, go away. Yeah one day I said to them, that's not yours, you have to share it. But he said go away.

I would take a visitor to meet my friend and my Dad. My friend is from Pakistan and he's got one brother and one sister. And he's very good. He sometimes comes to my house. And my Mum sometimes makes us chips...and sometimes burger. Sometimes it's cold and that's why he comes into my house – sometimes playing the computer. He's got a computer as well and we're playing a Moviestar game. I play Moviestar with my brother as well. It's my favourite. You have to do a good thing and they give you money – not real.

Big people is going to a shop that's got alcohol there – in the night time it's very shouty and they sometimes throw the bottle. That's what I don't like.

My Granddad gave me a t-shirt when my age was one. My Granddad gave it to me and after I was wearing it but it was very big. And after my Mum said to me 'That t-shirt is very big, we have to put it in a box and give it to your brother'. And I said to my Mum, 'No, that is very special. My Granddad gave it to me.' And then after my age is five, then I wear it and then it's very tight. And my Mum said just give it to your brother. And I'm saying, no that one is very special so I'm putting it in the box. And after my Granddad died.

I was maybe five when I left Pakistan. I remember my whole family with my grandmother is going to a trip. And I'm very sick and my Grandmother said to my Dad to take me home. But my family said no, no, no but everyone was upset.

Sometimes in Pakistan in the night time the light is gone. Like one, two hours. But Scotland's lights is not gone. Some parts of Pakistan don't have clean water. In Glasgow it is very good. In Pakistan in

the summer holidays, it's very good. It's very warm. Maybe I can go next year. But I haven't been yet because I have a green passport. When I get a red passport then I can go to Pakistan. I want to see my friend again. It's so many years. I will say to him – tell your Mum and Dad to come to Scotland, it's very good.

I would like to see London because I've never seen it. My Uncle lives there and he said come to my house and I will show you everything. I like the river and they've got a very big bridge. And I can take photos as well.

In ten years time I hope...like you know in Pakistan if someone doesn't have a house...I'd like to buy a house and give it to them. I'd like to make a school in Pakistan that you don't have to pay money to go to. Because some people don't have money."







“I can’t compare myself. I was born in Iran, and I lived in Iran for around 16 years. That’s why I match more with Iranian people with their problems, their sense of happiness... So I can’t compare with English people. It’s just my thoughts, but here, when they’re over the age 18 or 21, they can go and find a house for themselves. In my country they usually don’t do that, they’re with family, waiting for marriage, when they go someone else. After 30 years, 35 years, they don’t want marriage, they can’t move. This isn’t a ‘they can’ or ‘they can’t’ thing...this is the thinking that one has to stay with family. In Iran, families always go together. For example, my family has 4 people; my cousin has 4 people, or something. We [in Iran] have one holiday that’s like Christmas, but in September, the first or second of September, when the earth goes around the sun once...it’s a bit like the New Year (Nowruz). We’d always go to visit each other; parties, things like that - but always together. But I don’t see anything like that here, I’m not saying all English people are like that, but I’d say 50% of people are like that. This isn’t just Iran. Asian people live like that, but your people [English] are different. I want to compare Iran to here. So let’s say I ask my friends in Iran ‘how is your life, is it difficult?’ Maybe they’ll say ‘this government, always does something wrong...we can’t pay for things...we can’t buy a lot of food every week’, or something like that. This does not compare to here. I can’t compare here...I can’t ask someone, ‘how is your life, are you happy with your life, with costs in this country’ or something like that. It’s good here. And even for entertainment. I can’t ask my friend ‘can you do something for entertainment in Iran’. I ask my friend a lot of the time, and he said ‘I can’t go to the football stadium, we don’t have anything.’ In my country, the government came in and said ‘You had to put on hijab – the headscarf.’”





*"Story of my grandfather.  
He is an important person in my life  
because I've got most of his personality  
and size and build. I never met him but  
everyone said that he was calm sometimes,  
but mostly angry and sarcastic. He's been  
through a lot, moving from one country  
to another moving away from the police.  
From India he moved to Pakistan and then  
again he moved to Africa where he stayed  
and lived for around 25 years, some of  
our family members say that I kind of  
remind them of him."*






*"This brooch is close to my heart. It belonged to my grandmother Maria who died in 2005 when I was 8 years old. She will always be a part of my life, no matter what I do. She was a wonderful woman always ready to help others. Now when she is not longer here I am grateful for everything that she taught me. 'Learn to love people, they are leaving us too quickly'."*







*“When I was ten I fell in the water,  
in a river. I couldn’t breathe – it  
was scary. My dad had to jump  
in and save me.”*

## CULTURE

It is not just that a sense of identification with one's cultural origins, for example, may assist relationships with family. In the right supportive context, exploration of one's cultural origins may itself become a mechanism for engagement and identification with the wider (multicultural) community, and hence a vehicle rather than obstruction to active citizenship.







*"We have been doing a project about photography and there is a group of 5 of us that have been working on it, what we have done so far was we all took the little camera home and we all had to take photos of our family and the area we live in and many other interesting things that we like, what we also did was we all had to bring a object that is really important to us and someone of the group was videoing us and we had to say what the object means to us and what we like about it.*

*Eva brought us all sketch books to keep our work safe and to write notes that we have found and to stick out things in it. We also have folders for the Arts Awards and there will be 2 people that will get a chance to go to the London exhibition. We have all made an idea to make a movie about our school, so what we did was we did a storyboard all as a group and we try to fit in all the interviews we did and the photo's we have all taken on the cameras, so far its working the way we want it to work, but there*

*is one problem that we always had to move to other rooms so its harder for us because we have too many things we always need to move from place to place. Eva organized us a day out where we wanted to visit Lincoln Road but then we realized it was raining so we decided to visit the Town Centre, and we visited the Cathedral but we didn't go inside we was taking pictures of Town and we also visited a restaurant called the Chop Sticks and we tried to interview someone there but unfortunately they didn't want*

*us to. It was busy at the same time. On Friday we went to a trip to Spalding to the museum, we left the school at about 10:00am, a taxi came to pick us up and take us to the train station, then there was some trouble with the tickets but we got it sorted, we finally got on the train it took less than 30 minutes to get to Spalding, we had a whole day at the museum and we came back for school about 3:00pm, think we all enjoyed the day."*

*“These were first built just around 1840. This type of thing. Non Gypsy people or non Roma people would know these as a Gypsy caravan, but the proper word is Vardo. So this Vardo, and another word I like to use is Wagon, but this one here is a very special one. Because until about 17 years ago this one belonged to John Mills, Sir John Mills, the actor.”*

*Mr Boswell*







*"I came from Poland but my dad says that my old, old, old, old family are Gypsies. So that was a great opportunity for me to go to the Romany museum and see how my families lived. It's like really weird, because they lived in caravans. I think it's hard for them because they didn't have like water in them caravans."*



#### Conversation on Gypsies

[Frankie] I talk English all the time...the negative about it. They say, you're trying to act English...you can't be English. You're a gypsy...I'm not ashamed of being a gypsy, they think I am. Why would you be ashamed? I don't know...some people are ashamed of being a gypsy. If they don't like it, they don't need to look at me like that. As I say, they call me names and stuff, but to be honest, it lifts be higher, because I know that it's me. And if they don't it, they don't need to look. People are always trying to bring me down.

[Interviewer] You know, when someone labels you...*"you are like this, because you come from there, because these are your origins"*. It's completely stupid, everyone is completely different, not just because of where you come from, what you speak from...You are you, right?

[Frankie] Exactly. Even at school, I never used to hang around with Czech people. The only Czech people I used to hang around with (was hurt at school?). The English people would say that Czechs weren't as fortunate as the English. The style of living, stuff like that. So English people would call Czech people tramps and stuff at school. It's not a lie though. To them; we look like tramps, because our country isn't as fortunate as England. I used to hang around with English people, because I felt more comfortable with them. Say if I were to hang around with Czech people and they were talking amongst themselves, and I wanted to join in, I didn't know how to, because they talk in Czech, so I felt left out. So I joined the English group, which I stayed in for years. When I went back to the Czech group, asking "are you alright" and stuff they said "move, you don't belong to us, you try and act English" and all that. So how did you react then?

[Frankie] I just left it like that. I knew that if they can't accept me, it's their own fault. I'm not going to change for someone.

That's really strong.

[Woman] But you know, every Gypsy is different.

Yes, totally.

[Woman] For example, you see people from Slovenia. They're all different. Gypsies are different.

[Woman] Gypsies are everywhere!





Interview with Petr Torak,  
Community leader and police officer  
Peterborough square

**S: Why did you choose to become a police officer?**

The reason for me to become a police officer was to give something back to the country and to the community that I come from. Because I am a Romany Gypsy. And I thought about my options. One was to go to the politics and the next was the police. And thankfully I'm now in the police, working as the police officer and helping the community as much as I can.

**W: Could you list at least three festivals that you took part in?**

Through the group that I am part of we organise events like mother's day, International Roma day or International children's day. We also had Christmas party and other events.

**E: Why did you move to the UK?**

It was mainly my father's decision. After several racist attacks. So we have decided to come to the UK to seek a safe place and a new start to our lives.

**W: What happened in the Czech Republic?**

I was first attacked by group of skinheads. There was five lads. They stopped me in a busy city centre like here. Where there were lots of people. Stopped me with their knives and said 'oh, we want your money.' I first gave them money, they were pushing me to start fight with them. I was quite scared. I was there for twenty minutes with them but then I managed to escape. This was the first incident. But my mum and my brother were beaten up a few days later by a group of skinheads again. So after this incident my father said: 'we are living the country'.

Interview with Marcela Adamova,  
Community worker  
To Gypsyland, Tramway, Glasgow

**D: What kind of discrimination have you experienced when you were in Slovakia?**

For example, when I was in school the Roma children including myself were sitting at the back just because we were Roma and sometimes teacher used to say that all Roma or Gypsies stand up just to show that we are different, we are not equal to others or they were looking into the hair of Roma kids and searching for hair lice. They were doing it just to the Roma kids.



Interview with Ronke Osinowo,  
Poet and artist  
Family Friends radio station, London

That poem is called Coldheart CASH and it's a poem I wrote about selling gold for my parents when I was little to get money so we could have food and put the heating on and stuff. And what my mother used to do. She used to order catalogues from Freemans and stuff and order a lot of gold out of the sections. And then she'd get it all and we'd pay. Or not. And then when we'd come home from school she'd give us the gold and she'd tell us to go knocking on people's doors to get money. Coldheart cash.

**M: How does the story make you feel about yourself?**

When I wrote it, it made me feel a lot more comfortable about the situation I was in but when I used to do those things it was really difficult. It wasn't an experience I enjoyed. It was very difficult.

**M: Do you think it's good to share your experience with other people?**

Yes. That's one of the reasons I wrote this book. And mainly so other people wouldn't feel so isolated or feel so... Sometimes when you're young you feel a sense of shame. You feel like you are ashamed of certain things because you have no control over them. Or because other people are judging you. But there's no shame in doing what you need to do to survive. As long as it's not hurting anybody. But it takes you a while to grow up. Mentally and emotionally to write those things down and accept them in yourself and then share them. But I definitely think it's a good thing to share your experiences. Particularly difficult ones.

**M: Does it hurt you every time you read this out to the people?**

No. It is actually the reverse. The more I read it the less hurtful it is. Because the more I can accept it.

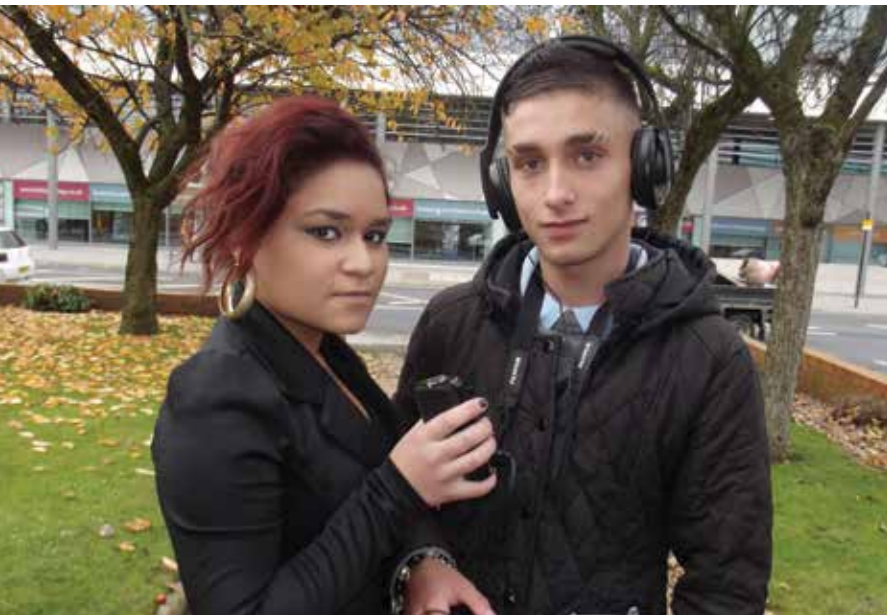
*"In my family tradition, my mum is dancing,  
gypsy dancing. Because I'm gypsy  
and I love dancing. She's dancing, my dad  
is dancing. Everyone in my family.  
And I think that I've got that in my blood."*





*"I am a gypsy right... I am a gypsy right, a gyping, tinkering, travelling Romany and a pretty lazy one at that. I don't sell pegs on the side of the road and wear coins from a bandana hat. I no longer travel in a caravan made of painted wood, where the flowers come out at you. My fortune telling skills are lost in a whirlwind of modern day static and the 9-5 working zoo. I won't steal the slate of your roof or your wife from the house, or con you out of your grandma savings. My palm reading and tea leaves divining will leave you with major misgivings. I refuse to be an outsider on the edge of town or on the side of the fields. An evil eye, hexes, curses all these revenges I no longer wield. I do still have the family, the tribe and the heritage of my exotic past. I do still wish for the kind of magic that this blood could once cast. I am proud to see where I came from and how its traditions can last. So yeah I am a gypo! What are you going to do about that?"*

*Keely Mills, January 2009*



*"When I was 11 years old I was trying to rap with my friend but we didn't have any good ideas for our songs, so we just stopped. But when we moved to England, I started to have ideas for my first song. The situation from my first time in London, helped me to write songs about my life. Now I only need the beats and some money to buy equipment. My dream is to record my song and make my own CD with my songs."*

*To hear Dominik's studio recording please visit [www.dreammakersuk.com](http://www.dreammakersuk.com)*

## BELONGING

Young participants, newly arrived into the UK, may feel they occupy an 'in-between' space, in the sense of belonging neither to their new environments nor the places they left behind.

The DreamMakers project and the exhibition created a space for negotiation of potentially competing forms of national, regional, ethnic or religious identities. For the participants from more established communities (English Gypsy, Irish Traveller), celebrating their respective cultures acted as an affirmation that their cultures matter, but also that it is possible to belong to different groups and to different spaces – school, local community, religious group – without compromising their identities.

Where the DreamMakers project took place within a school environment it represented an opportunity to act as a seed for belonging, encouraging parents to engage with school life, by representing their culture in the positive context of, for example, an exhibition or display.







*“I’ve been to the Central Mosque –  
it’s really big and it’s good.  
But the Mosques in Pakistan  
have gardens.”*









*"I think I belong now to here. Because I'm nearly all my life in England. I like it more in here than in my country. Because I got my friends here. I got my family here. I study. So I like it more here."*



*"This reminds me of a tunnel that I went through with my family. Underground with the train. Because we were travelling nearly all day. From the Czech Republic to Belgium to France and then to Czech and then back to England.*

*Because mum wanted a better life."*



*"When I was young I was at my Grandmother's and she was sometimes going to town and said come with me. And my Aunty as well. She is near my home. I was five years old in Pakistan and we went shopping for clothes. It's a happy memory because my Grandmother bought me a doll. I still have it but it's in Pakistan, not here. It's called Jasmine. My Grandmother has died now and I live here and my Aunty is in Pakistan. My Dad works here in the UK as a chef in Charing Cross."*

I miss Slovakia

because I want my friends to be with me and all I remember is when I was playing football with my friends and the feeling that I was going out with my friends.

MARCEL

In 2015 I came to England then I started playing and I was ~~happy~~ <sup>happy</sup> to speak and to write very I was feeling very sad because I couldn't make friends and since I didn't know English. It was very embarrassing because of that.

first thing when I came to England I was thinking about my grand dad when he was taking me to the park and when I came to England I was just crying.



My best sport is football

I am playing in football since I came to England and now I am 13 years old I play for Westham United and my school team my class my father inspired me to play football because he was playing for a Slovakian team

In 2018 I went to London and I was there for 2 weeks. It was a good game but I didn't like it.

My dream is to be a football player so I can play for Chelsea.

I want to be a football player for Chelsea and I want to be a football player for Chelsea.

I am going to visit Slovakia in 2020. I am going to visit Slovakia in 2020. I am going to visit Slovakia in 2020.





*"It was hard for me. 'Cause I remember the first days I came to England and I didn't know a word of English. I used to see people talk English. Like little girls. And I used to think, 'wow, look they're so clever. Because they can talk. English.' But then I thought, 'it's their own language.' And then I started school and I picked upon the language. And I can talk fluent English. That's my first language."*





*“My Mum goes to work every day at the potatoes. The bus comes for them, takes them there and brings them back. They take the good potatoes and throw away the bad ones – sorting them out. They put them in like three bags and put them up and the man with the cart, he takes them away for the shops. It’s hard work. My Dad was there. It’s hard work – you know*

*my Dad’s sister, her son has big arms like this because he is the one to put up. It’s a long journey there – it’s very far away. They go in the afternoon at three o’clock and they come back in the night at two o’clock or three o’clock. Friday they get their money. There are lots of people on the buses, sometimes two buses come. It’s all Slovakia people. Some Russian people.”*



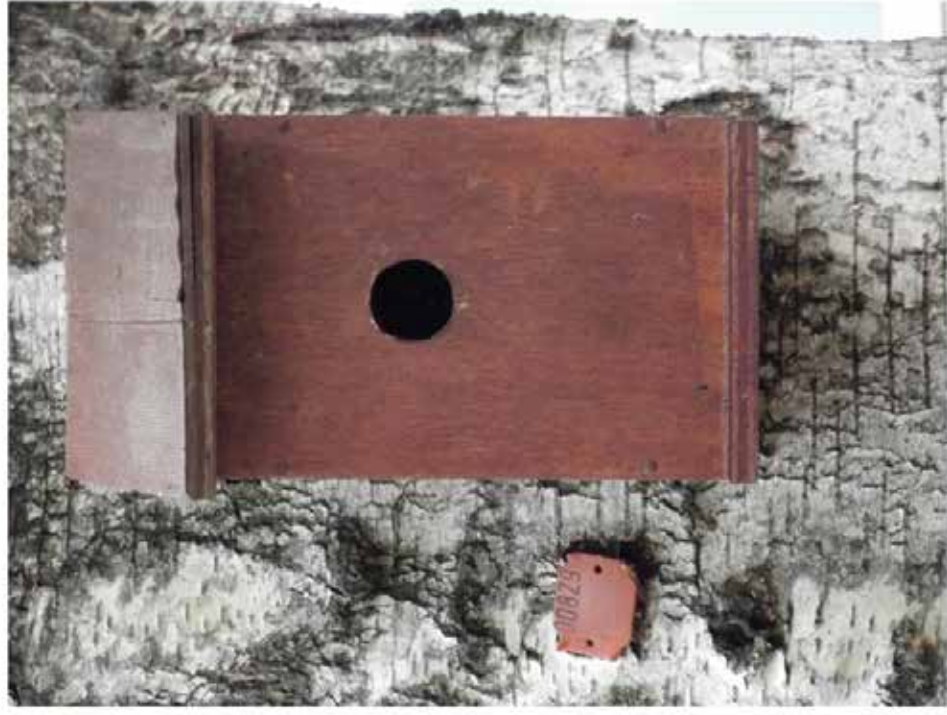


*Do you not get in conflict with the white people because you're not white yourself, like fighting and stuff?*

*No because once you learn the aspects of respect then they really would admire.*

*Could you tell me why are you wearing that scarf?  
Is there any particular reason for it?*

*Because it is Friday. There are two reasons for it. One, it is Friday. We've got Friday prayers. And the second one is it reminds me of my granddad. He passed away in 1991. I've got pictures of him to show that he used to wear turban as well.*



این گل زیبا نشان میدهد مثل یک بچه زیبا خانه تازه به دو دنیا بی پایدار  
و سر حال و تازه مثل این قفس که در داخل آن دو بچه گفتند  
است پس من به این میگویم زندگی بهرید.

THIS BEAUTIFUL FLOWER IS LIKE A  
NEW BABY FULL OF LIFE.  
LIKE THIS HOUSE IS A HOME TO TWO NEW  
BABIES BEING BORN. I TELL IT IS STORY  
BEGINNING OF A NEW LIFE.





*“Back home, my strongest memory is that I used to spend a lot of time with my family. At the same time I wasn't really focused on education. When I came to England my life completely changed. Here in England the school taught me a lot. I'm really grateful to my teachers because they are very familiar and they showed me the importance of education. In the future I would like to be nursery teacher, because the kids are the future of all of us. In order to realize the plan of my dream I would love to go to the top university in England.”*



*"I like my country because it's a bit hotter. The weather is good. But there is not enough of work and studies. So we thought of travelling to the UK. This is where we are staying, for better jobs and for better education. The life in UK is good. When I first came I went to Starting Point, 'cause I couldn't speak English. So, I went there. But then I went to college and I did English and I completed. It was quite difficult. It's difficult for everyone when they come for the first time here. Especially when they don't speak English. When they don't know what's the nature. You're going to a different culture. And all the expectations. All you have to give and show. It's different to where we are from. I didn't know what to expect. I couldn't speak English. And once you can't speak the language properly, then you are not able to do anything. Because everything you do is within the language."*

*"I thought that I'm not going to meet anyone. That there isn't going to be anyone from my country. That I'm just going to be on my own. But it was good when I came here. 'Cause everyone welcomed me. 'Cause they already knew my dad. So they had some friends. I know my friends through my dad."*



*"I would change the rain in Scotland. It's cold and I don't like it. It doesn't rain in Slovakia – it's always hot. Just once it rains there, every Monday. I don't know why. And I don't like the people who fight my brother every Friday. It means we can't go out. They stand waiting for him and we have to phone the police."*

## CITIZENSHIP & PLACE

When marginalised communities lack the means, networks and resources to represent themselves effectively, they tend to be noticed by the wider community only in so far as their presence constitutes interference or an annoyance.

Press coverage, pandering to popular sentiment, reinforces negative stereotypes. One long-term objective of DreamMakers is to equip young Roma, Gypsy and Traveller people to represent their communities in their own words and images, by sowing the seeds of journalistic and advocacy skills.

In the short term, the immediate work of the young people, revealing talent, resilience and aspirations, offers a compelling counter to negative preconceptions. A key objective of DreamMakers is to publicise the work as widely as possible, in particular among the target communities. The wider community is invited to exhibitions and the project is publicised through radio, talks, the blog, printed publications and partner networks. We are also discussing opportunities for raising awareness through public interventions such as 'clean graffiti' in Glasgow, hoardings in Bolton, and LED signage and postcards in Peterborough.

A project partner in Glasgow described how, 'an Afghan-born young person repeatedly referred to Scotland as "your" country. The suggestion that Scotland was "our" country engendered surprise. "Oh", he replied "nobody's ever said that to me before." We are all responsible for the environment in which this mindset has taken root. So rather than ask next year why he didn't vote, let's ask now: why would he?' (Williams, 2013).

### REFERENCE

Williams, B. (2013), Seen and heard, unpublished manuscript





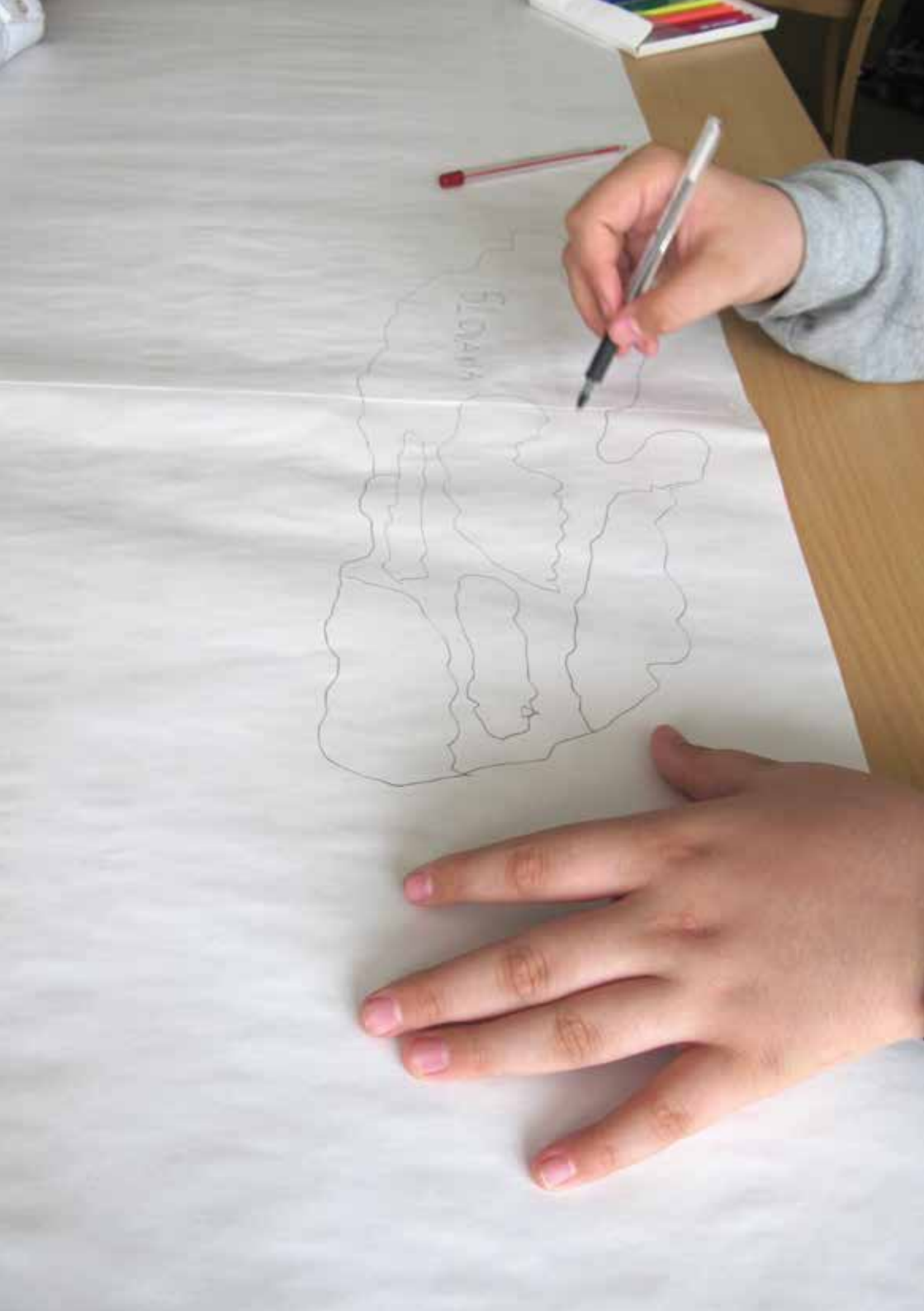
"It's strange  
the impact  
a place can  
have on you  
if you stay  
there too  
long."

I feel that I belong in Ireland because  
when I moved here it was hard for me and my family  
to make some new friends because the people  
were so different and they were saying things because  
we're Irish they want to see what we're like  
with us and that makes it hard  
me to feel I wouldn't like that to be in Ireland  
we all really

trip to the Gordon Russell Poetry Museum

It's amazing how any object you see could  
bring up memories from the past. Any object  
you have at home could tell the story of  
your family. It's amazing how any place you go into  
makes you feel like a part of it because  
it brings up so many memories from  
your past when you were a kid.

Written by Viktorid Miroslav



*"If someone came to visit my area in Glasgow for the first time, I would say welcome to my home and thanks for coming. And this is a surprise for me.*

*Shawlands is the best place to visit because my friends live here. It's ten or fifteen minutes on the bus and I go to play pool with my friends. I play football and rugby at Queen's Park too.*

*I would like to live in London because I love London. London is a beautiful country. A lot of people live in London. It's a busy country – I love busy countries. I love London. Glasgow is not very busy and London has a lot of games – I see in London a lot of games. Like people are sitting and do some games and have a lot of ideas. Glasgow doesn't have a lot of ideas. I'd love to live in London – a beautiful country.*

*If I'm older I will be a professional rugby player. I play for Glasgow now. I want to be a rugby player – a big rugby player. I want all people to know me. All countries know me, all people know me. Same as Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo, Harry Potter and Jackie Chang. It's a good life, I like that because if I'm watching to me then I know I am somebody.*

*My story is when I was little boy and I have a very bad story. I'm five, six years old and I'm in Afghanistan and I have a bad life and I'm not happy. And now my life is so better. I was living in Afghanistan with my Gran and Grandad and Uncle and I don't have my Mum, she*

*died. One day my Mum died and my Dad is in Glasgow and I don't have anyone – just my uncle and my Grandad and Grandmum. And I'm working, I'm not going to school. I'm six, seven, eight years old. I'm not going to school. And I don't have a good life – I'm not going for the park. I washed the cars, I had a job. It's a bad life, a bad story. I did this job until I'm nearly twelve years old.*

*And after nearly one year I'm living in the UK. And I'm so happy with my life. I want to pick the Afghanistan flag to show all the people. To show people the Afghanistan flag. I want people to know about Afghanistan and Afghans. Not all people are bad, just some people are bad. All countries have bad people and good people. And I want to tell people that Afghanistan people do not have a good life. Nearly in Afghanistan is thirty years of fighting.*

*And now all the countries know Afghanistan. Afghanistan is a good country – it's just some people don't like Afghanistan. You know what I mean? They don't like Afghanistan – you know fighting and all the things bad...like children is dying here. And a lot of these people, like for example some American people don't like Afghan people because white American people die in Afghanistan or white British people die in Afghanistan. But Afghan people don't like American or British people to die. This is not Afghan people doing this to American or British people – this is other people that are doing that.*

*Nearly thirty years Afghanistan is fighting. Every day you watch the news, nearly thirty, forty, fifty children, people die. For what? For nothing. For what? For money.*

## *I can't go back to Afghanistan. That makes me sad.*

*But I'm working for my country. Hard working. To put up the Afghanistan flag and I tell all the people that Afghanistan people is good people. Afghanistan people don't like fighting. And I want to show for all the people – this is Afghanistan.*

*Some people say "why are you coming from your country to here?" – you know what I mean? Why I'm coming here is because I have a lot of problem. If I don't have problem, I love my country. If I have a lot of problem I am coming to your country. Maybe some people are lying, not all the people. Don't think about all the people. All the people love his country. If I am safe in Afghanistan, why nearly every day do forty people die? Twenty people die. Something like this.*

*The biggest change in my life is my life is safe and I'm hard working for my country. I'm coming to school now and I don't have a job because I'm not eighteen or sixteen. I never went to school in Afghanistan. It's so different – life easy, life better. I'm hard working, I go to school and after school I want to go to*

*University and I'll be a professional rugby player.*

*I'd like to do engineering at University – building. New buildings, new projects, new ideas. I like engineer because, you know what I mean, it's good. Engineer is hard working. But it's not my only idea. I have another idea about the law. For example, people say "You're black" and I can say "No, why are you saying that? That's wrong". Or people who have a gun and shoot. "Why do you do this? It's bad." You do this – in law that's wrong so you go to jail because it's wrong.*

*And I'd like to help Malawi for the project at Holyrood. I know in Africa some people don't have a good life. They don't have food, they don't have good water. And I want to help people. All the people are the same for me. And I like to help all the people, all the countries. You know what I mean?*

*I'd like to go to Africa. And Spain because you know Lionel Messi the football player. He's a good man and I like watching Barcelona at the Nou Camp. Just watching this one.*

*In ten years time I hope I'm playing rugby for Scotland even if I live in London. I like Scotland. Scotland is good people."*





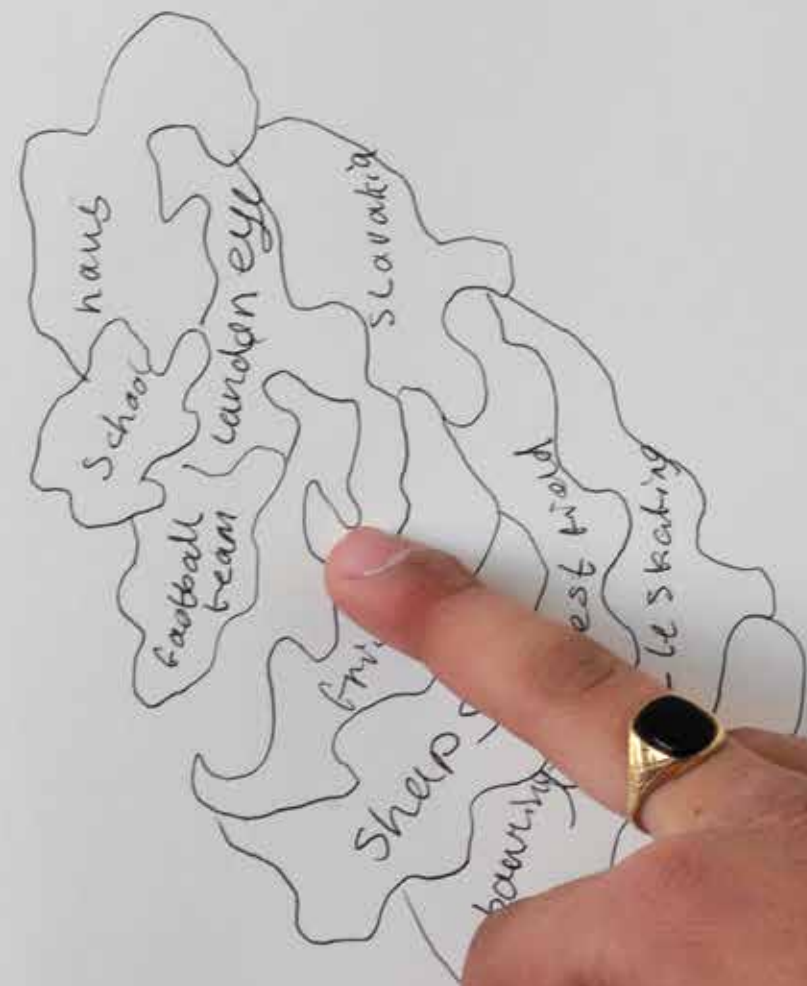
*"My favourite shop is Nad's News. I like the soup and chocolate. And crisps. I go there every day. The guy there is friendly and sometimes he gives me stuff for free because I am his customer every day."*



*"The best place to go in my area is the park. If you came to visit I would take you to meet my Mum, Dad and family. My earliest memory is playing in the playground in Slovakia. I was five years old and I played with dolls. I am twelve years old now. I am happy with the way I am."*

... It was very embarrassing  
that.

When I came to England  
... about my grand dad  
... taking me to the  
... I came to England  
... day.





*“I’m not sure if I’m coming back after the holiday. We are going to Slovakia, my father is going to stay here. If he can get a job, he would stay. If not, he would come back to Slovakia and then we would move to Warsaw where my cousin lives. If he has a job, we would come back here. I would like to see this school and all the teachers again. He’s not looking for anything but he’s waiting to see if the job continues. He works in social work.”*







*"I'm used to being in Scotland now so I think it's better here. I have been here a year. My cousin, she's here, she's been here for seven years. There's a small park here that we go to but if you go a little bit further there's another park."*

*Children have to go to school to learn English. It's very important to learn English so we come here, so that we learn."*

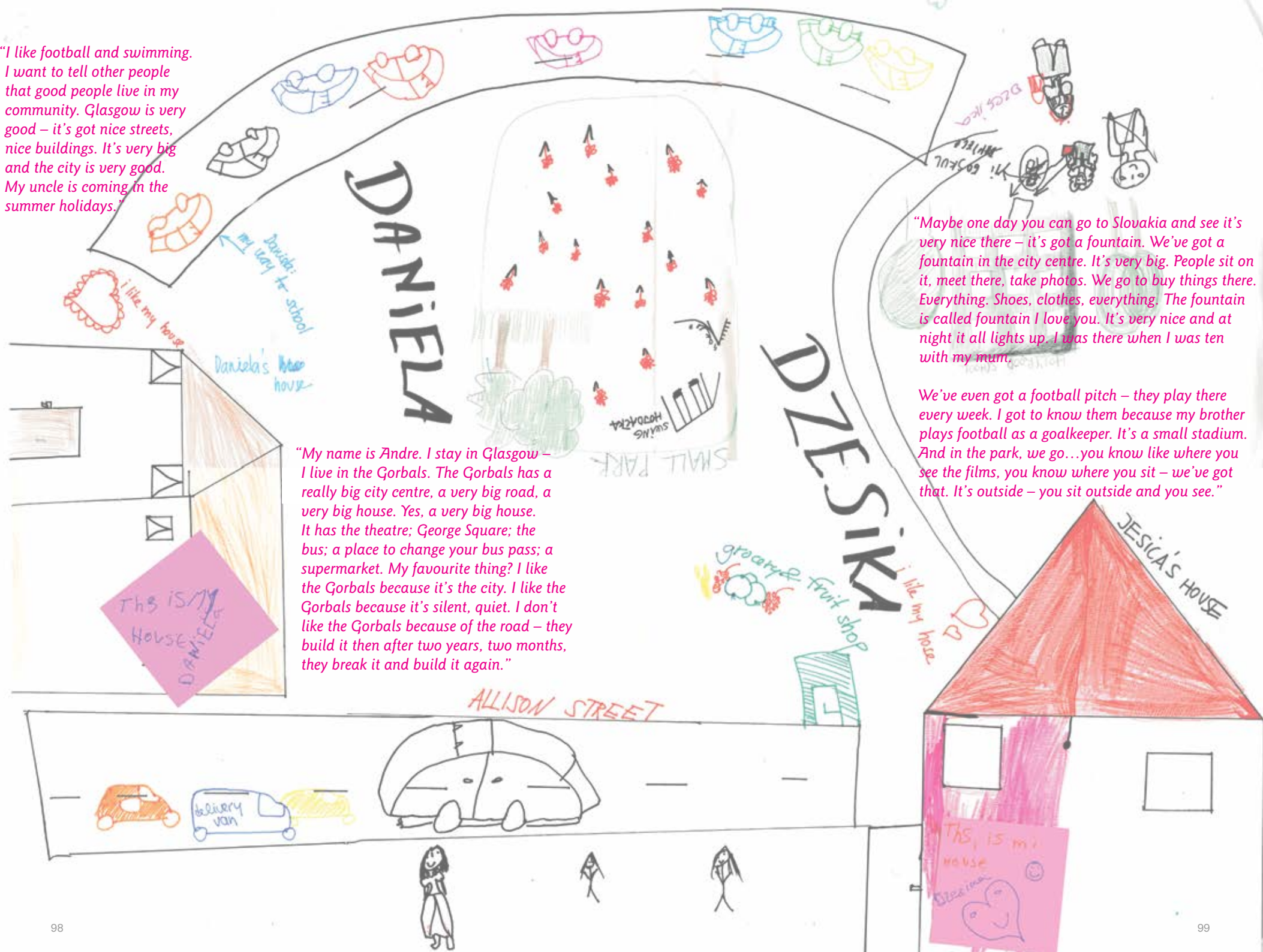
*"It would be interesting to go and interview actors – their pictures and their films would be interesting."*

*I would like to move to New York when I'm older. I like everything about New York and when I grow up I would like to teach dancing. Hip-hop. I started when I was about six or five and I learned myself. I watched TV and learned from that. I watch Shakira."*

*I miss Slovakia. I'm going there in the holidays – my father is coming today to tell the school. I'm looking forward to seeing my Grandma. I went to Slovakia about the time when I started this school. That was the last time."*



"I like football and swimming. I want to tell other people that good people live in my community. Glasgow is very good – it's got nice streets, nice buildings. It's very big and the city is very good. My uncle is coming in the summer holidays."



"My name is Andre. I stay in Glasgow – I live in the Gorbals. The Gorbals has a really big city centre, a very big road, a very big house. Yes, a very big house. It has the theatre; George Square; the bus; a place to change your bus pass; a supermarket. My favourite thing? I like the Gorbals because it's the city. I like the Gorbals because it's silent, quiet. I don't like the Gorbals because of the road – they build it then after two years, two months, they break it and build it again."

"Maybe one day you can go to Slovakia and see it's very nice there – it's got a fountain. We've got a fountain in the city centre. It's very big. People sit on it, meet there, take photos. We go to buy things there. Everything. Shoes, clothes, everything. The fountain is called fountain I love you. It's very nice and at night it all lights up. I was there when I was ten with my mum."

"We've even got a football pitch – they play there every week. I got to know them because my brother plays football as a goalkeeper. It's a small stadium. And in the park, we go...you know like where you see the films, you know where you sit – we've got that. It's outside – you sit outside and you see."

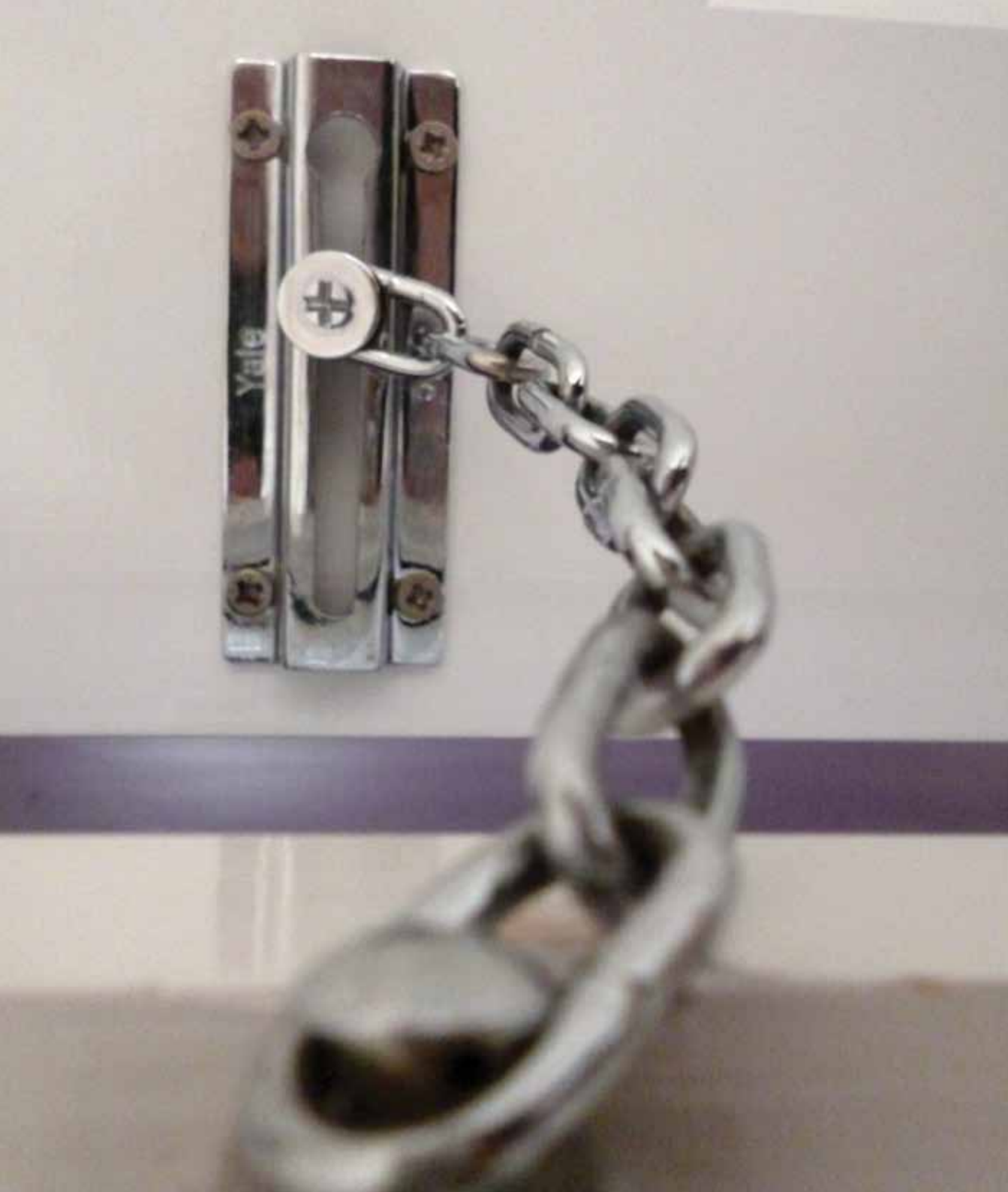




*"If you came to visit I would take you to meet my Mum, Dad and family."*

*"When I first came I was happy – it was good to be here. I was scared of the aeroplane. It was my first time on a plane. You see down – you see the tops of houses. The area where I live, there's too many people."*





*“When I lived in my last home I had grown with people around me and things around me. I’d seen the environment around me grow and change and the people around me grow and change.*

*Each thing had a special memory, each person had a special memory and each object had a special story attached to it.*

*When I first went to preschool the people I met there would turn out to be my best friends.*

*As I grew older and I learned the area around me a bit more I learned it was small but big for small.*

*But I was never allowed to venture out to experience it because of my dad so I learned to look at the small things in the house and the garden and to use that to represent the outside and to use that as the adventures.*

*The area I lived in was next to my grand parents because they used to live on a traveller site next to where I lived. When it was the holidays and weekends my dad would drop me over there for a sleepover. And with my dad at home I was allowed to venture outside.*

*There was a big field at the back of the site and you could walk for hours on end and it felt like you were going nowhere. I felt like I had a strong community where my grand parents lived and where I lived.*

*But the two were like separate, separate communities. One was my dad’s background and one was my mum’s background.*

*Where I live now I feel like I have no community.”*



*“If I could go anywhere I would go to Slovakia because I don’t want to live here. When I finish school I would like to go and live in Slovakia.”*

*Just now, I would like to move to a new house. I would like to change the colour of the houses.”*



*"If I could go anywhere in the world I would go to Slovakia. I haven't been there for five years. I want to live there and to see my brother. He has a wife and a small baby. I was eight when I saw him. My Dad came here first and he sent us money to come and we came with my Dad's friend because we didn't know where to go."*



*"In ten years time I'm going to have a car and you have a wife and a baby. My job will be fixing cars – maybe my own garage."*



A hand-drawn map of a city layout. The map is oriented with a vertical road on the left and a horizontal road at the top. The vertical road is labeled 'Park' at the top and 'N. S. Adams' further down. The horizontal road is labeled 'N. S. Adams' at the top and 'N. S. Adams' further down. The map features several buildings, including a large building with many windows on the left, a building with a sign that says 'N. S. Adams' in the center, and a building with a sign that says 'N. S. Adams' on the right. There are also several trees and a bridge. The map is drawn with simple lines and includes some handwritten text.

Scotland is bigger than Slovakia. You know Slovakia is small – it's not a big country. And the Czech Republic is bigger than Slovakia. I like Slovakia because some Scottish don't like Slovakia people. Some fight with Slovakia people. You can't stay out to the night. People come ask if you've got a fag on you – you don't give him and they just fight you. I don't know why. It's not everywhere – just in Glasgow. Some people. I would tell everyone that we're not scared. We don't understand – we want to be friends with the Scottish people.

*Maybe they can, you know, maybe they can ask to him come and play football. And they ask about your name and they shake hands and they're friends. Yesterday we were playing tennis and a guy asked if he can play with us. I say ok and we're friends with him now. Just ask people."*



*"Here, every day we play football – the Slovakia people. We play in Queen's Park. There's a pitch. I was there all day, all the time yesterday. We play football with Slovakia people and Scottish people. We play for money - £2. One pays £2 and they pay £2 and we've got £4 and we play for three goals to win the money. Sometimes we do that. Last time we put £5 for £5.*

*I play tennis at the same place. Sometimes we meet new people, sometimes not. I feel safe in the park. I go on the bikes and have skates and a skateboard as well. We have too many friends."*









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# DREAM MAKERS



CLOSE-UP Lacy Gabriel with some of his artwork

LOOKING GOOD Models prepare their make-up and on the catwalk at the college's special exhibition

## Youngsters dispel myths at exhibition

BY SARJA CHAUDHARI

MYTHS were dispelled and dreams and aspirations of young people were shared at a special exhibition.

Bolton College students from Roma, Gypsy and non-Roma heritage put on a multi-media display on the themes of identity, community, dreams and aspirations.

There was photography, video, sound and drawings.

The exhibition was part of a DreamMakers project where young people aged 13 to 19 were given cameras to capture their communities.

As part of the exhibition, three performing arts and drama students from Bolton College also hosted a music and fashion show to celebrate the exhibition which was staged at The Market Place.

The students will take their work to London in June to show at the national DreamMakers exhibition.

Shahmin Zeb, English for Speakers of Other Languages lecturer at Bolton College, said: "It was fantastic to see the students' hard work on display



STEPPING OUT Models show off their fabulous costumes

and it was such a great celebration of the culture.

"Hopefully, the exhibition will dispel people's pre-conceived perceptions of Roma, Gypsy and non-Roma travellers. We can't

wait to follow the students' progress, when they go to the DreamMakers final exhibition at 100 Contemporary Arts' gallery in London.

"I would personally like to thank

everyone who helped make the event such a success, including: Ashia Zeb from Little Lever School for styling the hair, as well as Umarina Singh, a 13-year-old from Harwood, who sang at the

exhibition. It was out to the 100 Collection by Ahmed, for accessories, fashion show



"Most of people think that gypsies are only one kind of gypsy, but it's not true. You've got more kind of gypsies: Gypsies, Travellers, Roma. All kind."



*“I take photos  
to show people  
in Pakistan  
my school here.”*





## DREAMS & ASPIRATIONS

An exploration of future aspirations was facilitated in part through organising interactions with role models from across the community. This opened up previously undreamt potential and possibilities, including success rooted in cultural expression. In Glasgow, for example, we visited Celtic Football Club, a criminal court and a theatre; in Peterborough, the Boswell Romany Museum and a local Romany poet; in Bolton, the Excellency Centre, a venue where some of the group members previously performed in a fashion show; and in London, we held a recording session with Family Friends, a community radio station, and visited an exhibition of Gypsy art To Gypsyland at 198. Incidentally, in travelling from place to place, sometimes participants were learning to negotiate the public transport system for the first time.



*"....I usually edit them. I upload them onto the internet or wherever my friends want me to. Or I'm usually asked to take pictures of them, because they tell me I'm taking some nice pictures."*





*"I went to school in Cameroon – primary school. In Cameroon, school is very, very important. The best thing about Scotland is school. I like school.*

*If I could go anywhere I would go to Africa, to my country. I miss it. I like my country. I'm going for a holiday, stay long, long. Come back.*

*I want to be an oil engineer to find the petrol. I want to change the country because the country no have money, petrol, oil, food, water – no. I give them to the country. You know poverty? You no have money, no have food, you no have water, you no have oil, no have petrol, you no have building, no have car, you no have chair, table, TV. I give him. In Africa. Because I like to help the people – very good. Oil engineering, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering. Three."*



*"I had a dream that there were little people everywhere and they closed me somewhere and then I was laughing. I was still big. There was a lot of ants as well. The little people were the size of ants. It was in the big park and there was statues. It was in the museum."*



*"I finish school and then I'll go to college to study and I want to do a driving licence and have a car. I'm not sure where I want to go to college. I want to study hairdressing. I went to one and she's from Pakistan. She is very clever – she can do hair and make up. She did my hair. She works on Allison Street."*



*"When I was younger and I first got my fossils his name (Charles Darwin) cropped in the middle of it and I didn't know why. As I came more interested in archaeology his name came up more. I looked him up and he represented the enjoyment I had with the science and how it developed differently in the past to now. He represented the development of and from the past to our times.*

*The time he was in was imperialist and the way people thought was narrow. He had a wide and open mind and changed how scientists think and how science is in general. It was a big boost to help people think. He is also a big figure in the British history – a revolution for the nation in general and science. Britain became a big figure in modern science."*





We are at the Excellency Centre. Frankie, can you tell me something about the Excellency Centre please?

*The project we were doing here [Young Roots Fashion Heritage Project], we had a fashion show and there were dancers and models for fashion. So we have got memories about the place and we would like to interview the person that owns it, who was watching us.*

*"I finished studying and I would like to find a job. I'm looking for receptionist work and officer, stuff like that. Or doing the translation job for like people from my country. Because I've done that before and I really liked it."*



*"If I'm older I will be a professional rugby player. I play for Glasgow now. I want to be a rugby player – a big rugby player. I want all people to know me. All countries know me, all people know me. Same as Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo, Harry Potter and Jackie Chang. It's a good life, I like that because if I'm watching to me then I know I am somebody."*



*"I'd like to get a job in theatre. I'd like to be a dancer. Or an engineer. Or an art teacher. I like to take photos. My dad is a chef and would like me to be an engineer."*





How did you come to work with this project?

*I heard about the DreamMakers project from my friend who'd been invited to take part in the project by The Children's Society. I always liked photography so it was a great opportunity to do something I like and I decided to join in. DreamMakers Project helped me to reconnect with my passion for photography. I met many great people and learnt a lot about taking photos professionally. I visited many places that I'd never visited before, e.g. 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning.*

Did you shoot photographs or create art for the project?

*During the workshops I took many photographs but we also created some art, e.g. posters, flags. I took photos at home and in the local area to illustrate my home to school journey, etc. I also took many documentary photos of other people from my group during the workshops.*

Can you talk a bit about your photographs/art?

*I like to take landscape photos the most because I can see the nature from a different perspective, e.g. I can see a tree in a different light than other people and I'm enjoying it and it's like a part of me. I often take pictures from a different angle. I've tried to photograph children of my family members to connect my two dreams - I'd like to become a nursery teacher in the future and a professional photographer.*

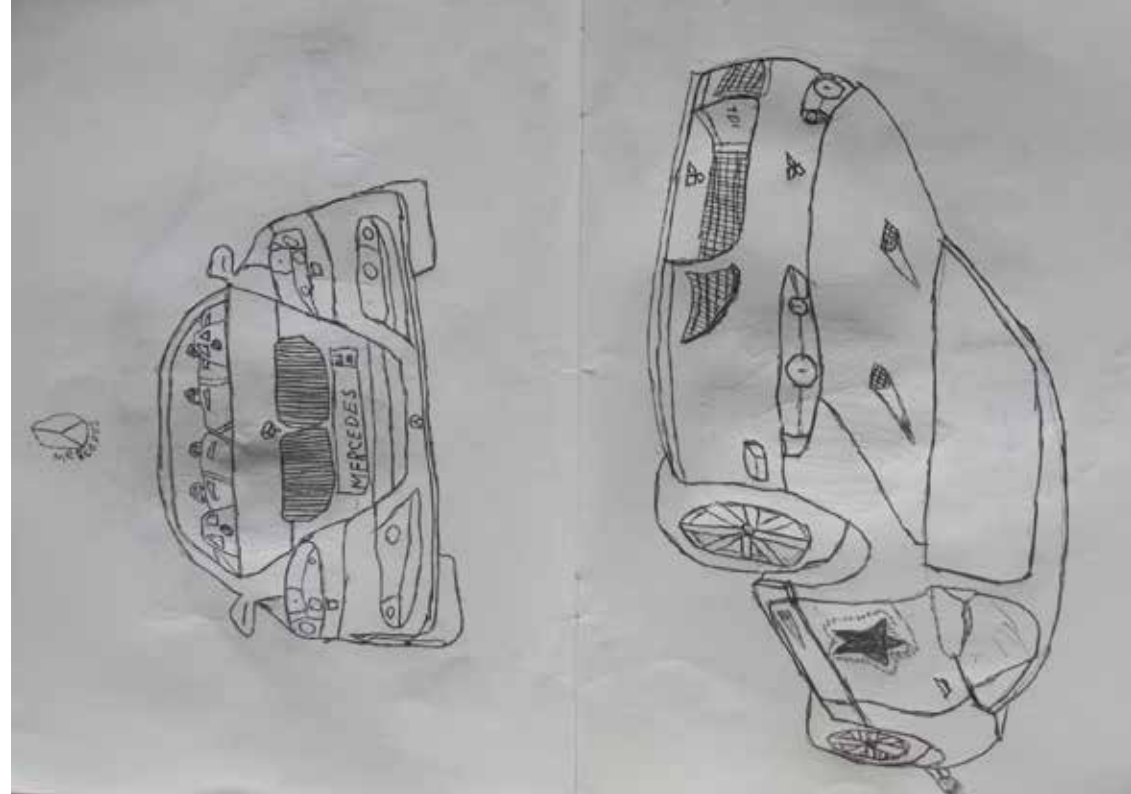
How does it feel to share your photos in this exhibition?


*It feels great because it is a big achievement for a young person of my age to have their art/photos exhibited in an exhibition. It will help me in the future to achieve what I want. Every time I take photos I always want to ensure that they convey a message or provoke people to ask questions about them, otherwise I believe they are not interesting. I believe that one can find a beauty in anything and photos make it last.*





*"I would like to do the cars when I'm older – you take out the things, you put here. I like to do the cars. Like they're broke and you fix it."*



A man with a shaved head and a beard, wearing a light blue t-shirt, is standing in a gym. He is holding a black dumbbell with a red label that says '15' in his right hand. He is looking towards the camera with a serious expression. In the background, there are gym equipment and a large window.

“Patience is one value  
which should never  
get tested”

*“I’m doing public services at Bolton College. Public services is for if I wanted to join the army or police force or ambulance. Because I’m doing public services I need to be active. So we come to Bolton Lads and Girls Club and do various activities like dodge ball, basketball, rock climbing. Last time we run 5 mile. Even if it is not with college you can just come in your own time. They provide food, drinks. Load of different facilities in this club. It’s really good and I think it brings the community together, to get communication skills.”*









*“When I was younger and living in my last home I had little to do or think about so when I went to bed I was always excited and happy because I remember all my dreams and they seem to last so long and were full of fun. When I started to have some of the same dreams I thought in the dream of this has happened as I start to remember I realise that it is a dream I quickly try to do something that is impossible in the real world I try to spin my body through my leg and I did I was so happy that I was in a dream and so I walk around and look at the place I was in. It is my school I did not like it that much so thought dinosaurs will be fun and demand dinosaurs jungles grow all around me and a volcano grows in the distance I then realised that the dinosaurs are going to probably eat me and I run home I run and run but get nowhere and then again realise I am in a dream and make my house get here then the volcano explodes and ash fire races to me I then thought as I was near my death in my dream and force myself to wake up I struggle to wake fading in and out of my dream I then get my hard to move limbs to rock myself I wake up.*

*Anything bitter is sweet to someone, anything sweet is bitter to them. The happy to you is sad to them the sad to you is happy for them. All things have opposites but all things share the feeling.”*



*"I'd like to do engineering at University – building. New buildings, new projects, new ideas. I like engineer because, you know what I mean, it's good. Engineer is hard working. But it's not my only idea. I have another idea about the law. For example, people say "You're black" and I can say "No, why are you saying that? That's wrong". Or people who have a gun and shoot. "Why do you do this? It's bad." You do this – in law that's wrong so you go to jail because it's wrong."*

*"I'm going to University in Scotland. The place we visited. I'm going to be a teacher. Maths, English, Geography or Science. See after I finish the teaching, if I don't like it I'm going to sell my cakes from the shop."*





*"I have two brothers, two sisters. They are younger. When I was younger I liked to play with my friends – football. Go to football, city centre, Africa. In Cameroon. Go to city centre, football, play team. I was playing football in a club. Cameroon likes football. Cameroon plays good, very good. Scotland is little, Scotland is little. Scotland is not a very good player at football!"*



*"If you're making a big cake, you put one bag of flour, six eggs, four sugar spoons – big ones. You put in the butter (just one spoon) and one glass of milk. You mix it. And you leave for ten minutes like this.*

*Then you roll it, make four squares and put them to the side. The red stuff gets squeezed in, you put the squares on top of each other and cook for twenty five minutes. After it comes out, add the icing and eat!*

*I've been making since when I was five. I saw my Grandmum doing it."*





Within the great walls of a toppling castle  
lived a young girl. She was tall, with  
long flowing hair. She lived there on her own,  
roaming for days on end, no intention to venture into the  
outside world. Until one day she heard something but  
she didn't know what it was, so she went to investigate  
running the lengths of the darkened halls.

Her only company - ancient spider corpses and  
dusty snail shells. There she found something in the  
shadow she didn't really know who or what it was,  
it started coming closer and she began to see what it  
was a monster with black feathery wings and 2 eyes  
popping out, he was really tall and hairy. The oil  
lamp she carried began to flicker - ppl.  
The two flames went out. Silence fell over the castle.

Monster nor girl were ever seen  
again.

## STREET WORK

In Glasgow the project also worked with 25 young people through street engagement. Young people from the Govanhill Roma community were given cameras and, with the support of the artist and sessional workers from WSREC, created a body of work representing each other and their community. The pictures were taken along Allison Street and at the Daisy Street Community Centre, where young people gather for youth afternoon clubs.





















"Every Thursday we go to the club on Daisy Street. We play, sing, dance, write. We do everything. My friends all go – it's for Slovakian people."

pochodim z českej republiky mám rada hudbu kávie páty  
kamady zabavovat se každý pátek a sobotu jít s kamarády  
mi do parku ~~na~~ chodit do školy a by sem se něco  
vyučila na přelom na kaděnici a v nichle jenom  
opracovat.

H Mo Romale Šunen Turmen  
man soske vay broo' man Ma  
Kamen Te Šunen soske  
Turmen

me šut utarav! oge lo me šut bauer.  
oge me šut utarav bauer pale aneba me šut  
utarav me šut čimichav šijne bade  
custova bijve bale jabara andilendi me dibae  
So me šuke se penem zle šut oge igen  
bauer me šut utarav.











The project methodology imports principles from Gordon Allport's 'Contact Theory', which argues that under appropriate conditions interpersonal contact is one of the most effective ways to reduce prejudice between majority and minority group members, making available broader concepts of identification. According to Allport (1954), to be effective the contact must be positive and involve equal status between the participants: common goals, inter-group co-operations, the support of authorities and personal interaction.

DreamMakers uses contact theory in two ways:  
1) ensuring mixed backgrounds in the composition of the

groups of young people; and less obviously 2) introducing the groups to community institutions, such as a criminal court, in a context that promotes positive associations on both sides (i.e. from both the perspective of court staff and the young people).

Recognising that for many Roma the safest course may seem to be to disguise their origins, part of the artist's role is to create a sense of sanctuary where young people can speak about their culture and background with confidence. Questions such as: 'What does Gypsy mean to you?', 'Where do you belong?', 'What values and traditions does your family observe?' prompted discussion about the importance of telling their personal stories in order to counter misunderstanding and the many stereotypes that their cultures face.

The use of different media presents opportunities to explore notions of identity and belonging in a relaxed and safe way, in which the artist facilitates the process in a non- authoritarian way. The process reflects educational theories of Freire and Giroux (1997), in which the teacher is a co-producer of knowledge, facilitating the student's empowerment through collective awareness and non-authoritarian collaboration.

'The teacher presents the material to the students for their consideration, and reconsiders her earlier consideration as the students express their own.' (Freire, 2000)

The artist assumed the role of initiator of an activity, offering the tools to the participants who then explored, developed and expanded it. This created a situation where both the artist and the participant learned from each other throughout the process.

Participants worked in different ways. Some of the activities, for example 'Photo – Treasure Hunt', the caption writing and editing were conducted in groups. In others, such as preparing for and conducting interviews, specific roles were assigned to individuals. Two cameras were given out on a rota basis for participants to take home and produce work with friends and communities.

Activities involving games, visits and role-play were intended to be fun and to shift the perception of space and power relations (a particular feature where work took place in school classrooms). It was important to keep emphasising that fear of making mistakes should not inhibit self-expression.

Participants were invited to engage in active research and encouraged to introduce their own interests, skills, values and past experiences to the process. Alice McIntyre (2006) argues 'that increasing teaching-learning experiences that are relevant to students' everyday lives provides opportunities... to create collaborative relationships with adults that foster personal, social and academic skills'.

Participants from mixed backgrounds shared and learned about each other throughout the process. A hands-on approach, where cameras and other equipment were distributed at the beginning, stimulated participants' curiosity as they looked through the viewfinders and heard the sound of their own voices (supporting Allport's criteria of enjoyable interaction). This form of group activity helped to bridge the gap between individuals who in some instances had initially objected to working together on the grounds of language and culture difference. Other interactions encouraged new modes of identification in more subtle

ways. For example, a visit to one participant's home was arranged where the discussion between himself and his parents revolved around ideas of their children's education, Roma values and traditions, and belonging. As the parents didn't speak English, communicating with their son only in Romany, the young person acted as translator for the questions asked by other participants present, casting that individual in the role of a bridge between communities, and prompting others to identify with the complexities of parental relationships.

Group work had its challenges. In Glasgow, for example, where participants spoke many different languages and fluency in English was generally low, activities had to change quickly to keep everyone engaged and the work moving forward.

The work was installed as a collective piece, a patchwork of individually or group produced photos and stories. As some of the stories were very personal it was important that the treatment of the collected materials was responsible. To avoid exposure and victimisation we decided to acknowledge authors' names on the introductory panel but not on each piece. Being involved in the exhibition installation helped the participants to understand the project and the importance of working together to realise an individual and collective outcome. It symbolised the possibility of achievement and positive recognition from within the community without compromising cultural identity, providing a focal point to draw in parents, teachers and members of the wider community.

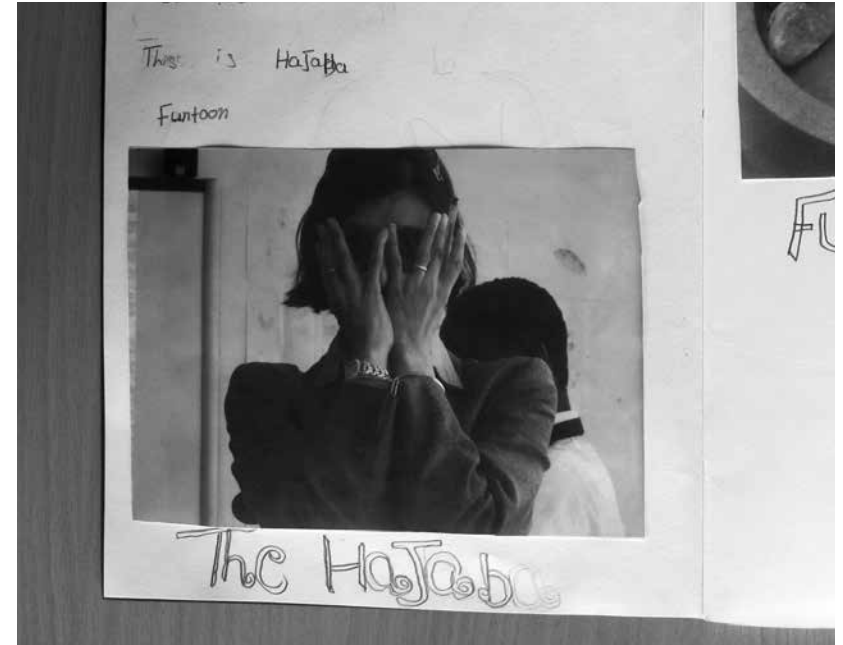
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- Freire, P. (2000), *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, New York, NY: Continuum
- Giroux, H. (1997), *Education and Cultural Studies: toward a performative practice*, New York, NY and London: Routledge
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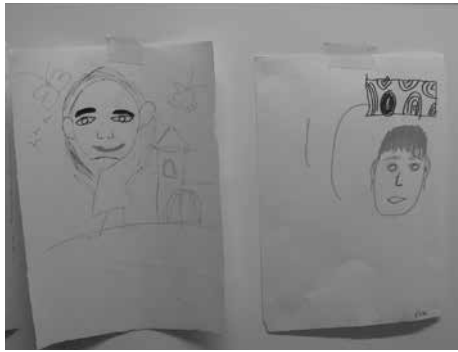




Visual literacy, editing & captioning.



Results of Photo Treasure Hunt activity, selected through editing process, captioned in relation to personal experiences.



Games: to connect through observation, play and image theatre.



Storytelling: creating a story based on an edit of five photographs.



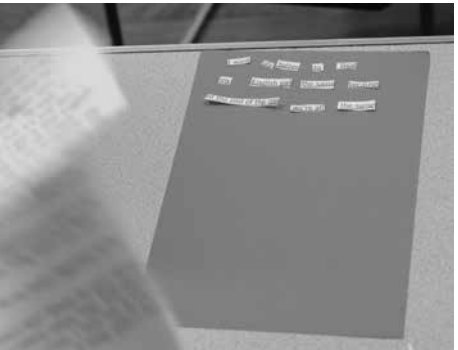
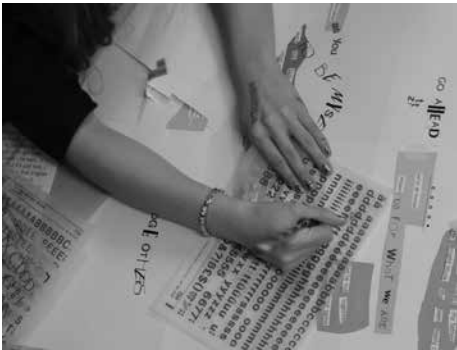
Sharing skills in dance as part of Arts Awards activities and flower making (also referring to the Contact Theory).



Ice breaker: taking polaroid portraits of each other, then writing about oneself.



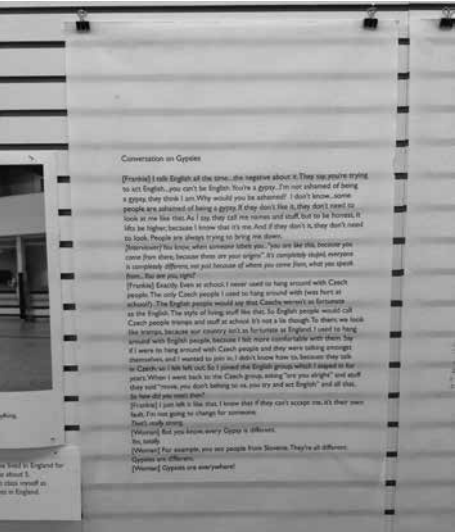
Mapping what community means.



Used in Newham: through re-interpretation of text young people created new pieces of work and then re-photographed them in situ. Playing with perception and viewer's 'consumption' was part of the process, thus misspelling was deliberate.

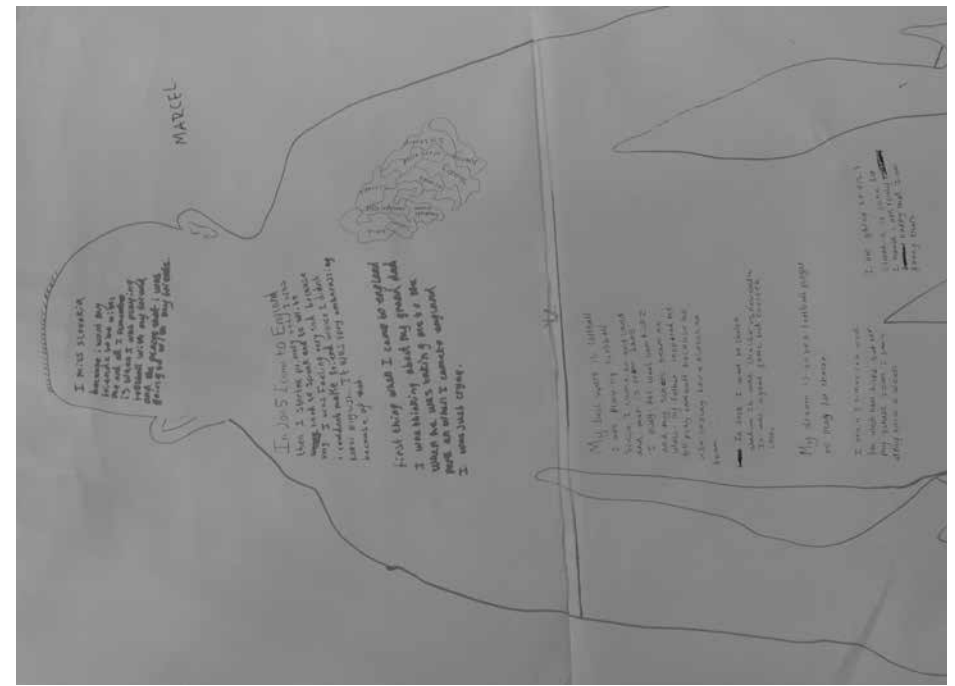
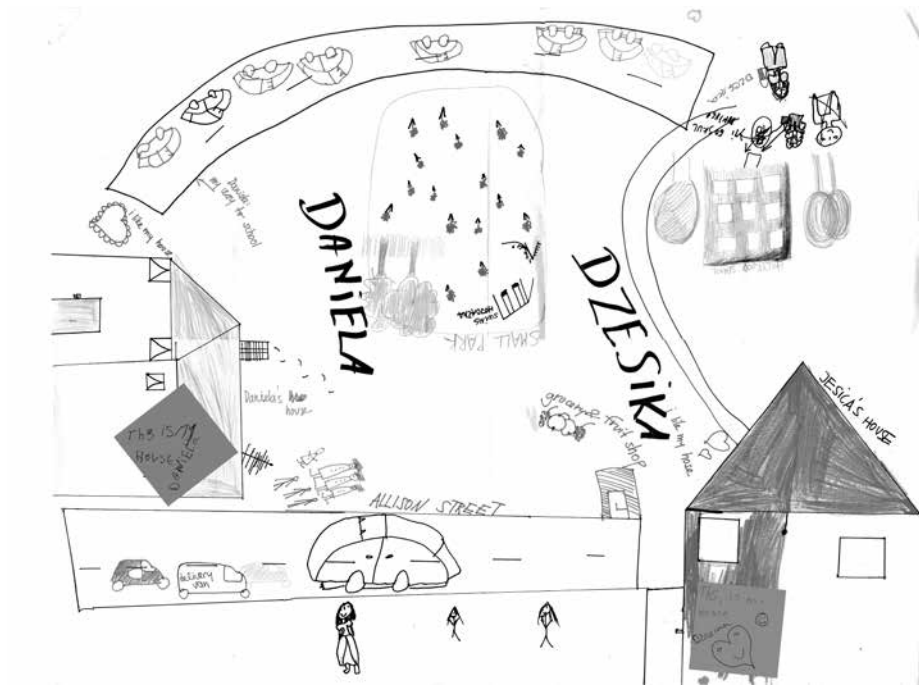


Preparing and rehearsing for the interviews.



An example of transcript from a conversation between two participants in Glasgow.





Mapping place and self and then presenting it to the video camera – also a good example to discuss how research/work/documentation/evaluation interlink and interrelate.



Collecting each other's stories: pertaining to the self, the community, acknowledging the loss, personal traits, skills influenced by the culture (dance, music, performing and singing).



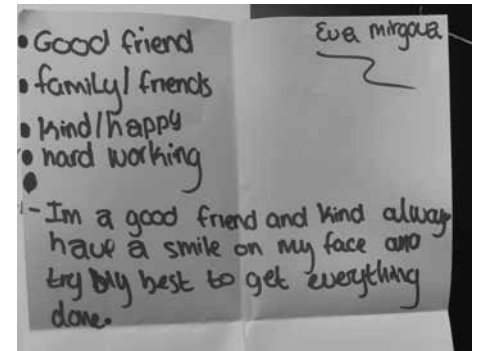
Challenging perspectives: interview in court and with the police, reporting on the issues in the communities, engaging with role models, gathering accounts on past experience, reporting on skills in the community.

Exploring dreams and aspirations: first time for Dominik to record his rap in a professional recording studio, visiting theatre and an interview with somebody from the theatre, visit to a local community radio and trial recording session, interview at the stadium.





Artist role in initiating and supporting:  
visiting Marcel's home where he acts as catalyst  
through translation.



Learning about Romany culture and heritage  
through a display (Boswell Romany Museum)  
and engagement (Romany poet Keely Mills).



Contact Theory: mixed groups of young people from different backgrounds, engaged in an activity with a common goal and encouraged to learn and share from each other and to explore each other's cultures (Kabir talking of belonging and religion).

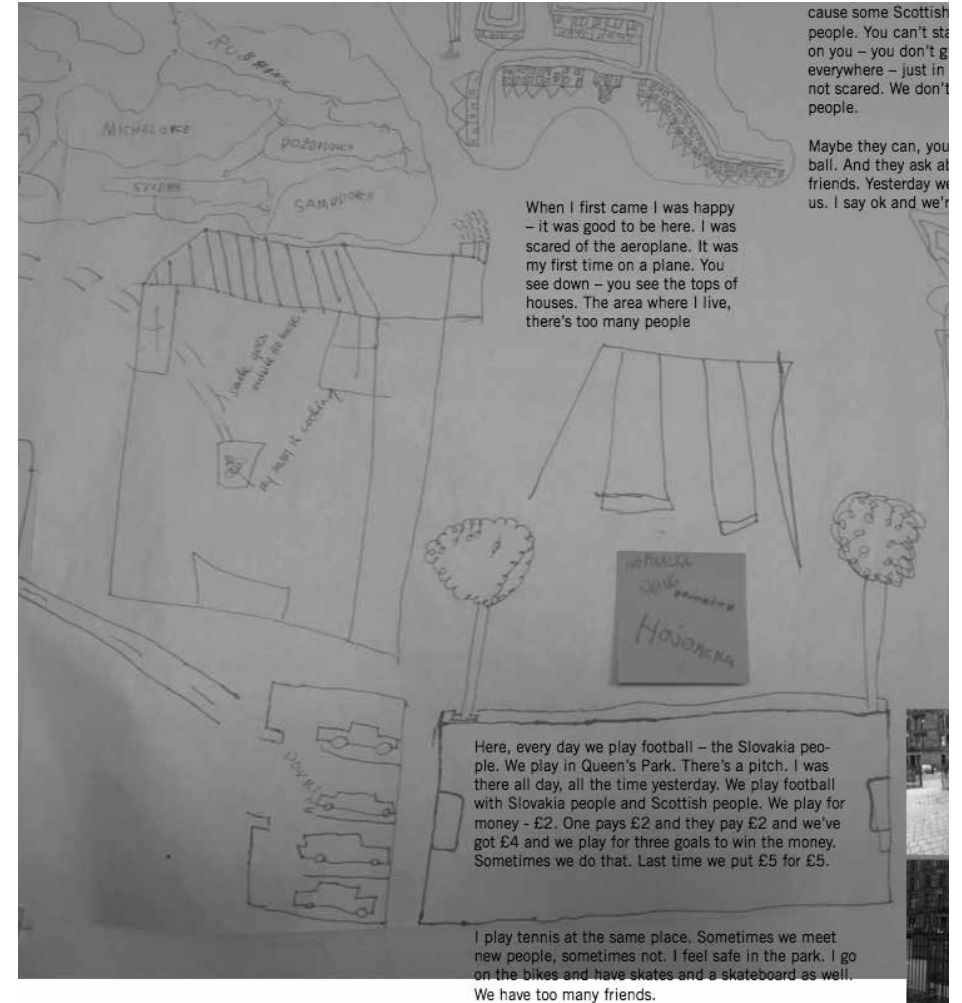
Using public transport for the first time.



Exercise: storyboarding on a collectively chosen theme, using photographs previously taken.



Assembling material into a form.



Deciding how texts are to be used.  
Example from the exhibition in Glasgow.



**THE PEOPLE**



Ernest, Performer



Eva, Vet



Sophie, Journalist



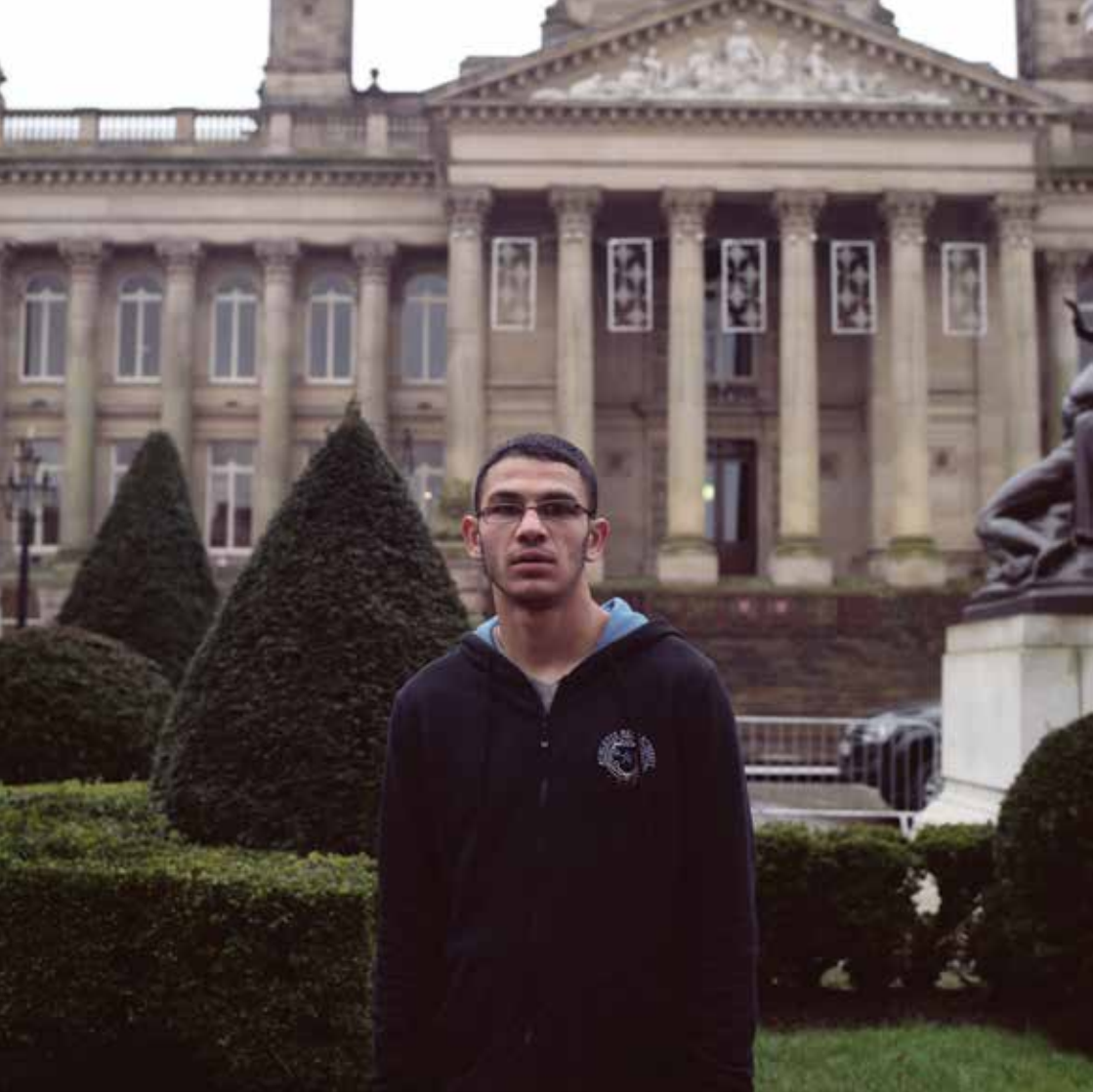


Wiktor, Choreographer



Connor, Scientist





Marek, Performer and Dancer



Andrea, Model



Nikolas, Mechanic



Ladislav, Filmmaker





Frankie, Public Servant  
Kabir, Fitness



Denise, Translator



Sara, Photographer



Dominik, Musician



Martyne, Child Psychologist



Radka, Singer





Maria and Jennifer, Beauticians



Marcel, Football Player



Maros, Car Mechanic



Dzesika, Hairdresser





Rastislav, Draftsman



Andre, Football Player





Shoaib, Dancer/Art Teacher



Farzad, Rugby Player



Maryuam, Craft Maker



Jesika, Pastry Chef





Esmeralda, Beautician



Beatrix, Daniela and Dzesika, Hairdressers



**DISSEMINATION**



## DreamMakers

14<sup>th</sup> June - 20<sup>th</sup> July 2013

Project Launch 14<sup>th</sup> June, 5pm - 8pm

198 Contemporary Arts and Learning are pleased to present DreamMakers an exhibition by photographer Eva Sajovic and 23 young people from Glasgow, Bolton, Peterborough and London.

DreamMakers is a UK-wide project initiated by Eva in collaboration with 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning and funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. This project expands Eva's interest in the rights and representation of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities and develops the work she began in *Belonging: Travellers Stories, Travellers Lives* (198 March 2010). Eva has worked with a number of agencies in each location, to bring together young people between the ages of 13-19 from Roma, English Romany, Irish Traveller and non-Roma. With the DreamMakers, Eva shifts the focus away from herself as the chronicler of these communities, placing the tools of creative and journalistic communication into the hands of the groups of young people, encouraging them to tell their own stories, thus becoming advocates of their own experiences and those of their communities.

The goal of the DreamMakers was to provide training and encourage the young people to share experiences and skills in photography, sound, video and drawing, exploring themes of identity, migration, belonging, dreams and aspirations. Eva used contact theory techniques bringing people from different groups together, to encourage collaboration between them and the artist. The hope is that the common goal or experience, as with taking part in the project, will help towards combating prejudices towards the other. The use of various media tools from digital camera's, sound recorders and mobile phones, enabled the young people to communicate and connect, through something that was familiar, yet able to overcome the dependence on one particular language.

After a series of showcases of the work in each location this final exhibition, brings together materials gathered during the project and has involved the young people in the co-curation of the exhibition. This will also be an opportunity to explore the contextual underpinnings of the project and exhibition with a series of events and symposia, bringing together speakers exploring Gypsy, Roma, Traveller rights, representation, citizenship and belonging from within and beyond the UK.

To find out more about the project visit: [www.dreammakersuk.tumblr.com](http://www.dreammakersuk.tumblr.com).

A book documenting the projects will be published in Autumn 2013.



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www.198.org.uk

### Exhibition Events

25<sup>th</sup> June 2013

10 am-5 pm

Symposium

Citizenship &

Belonging.

In relation to

themes

emerging from

the

DreamMakers

project with Eva

Sajovic, Engin

tin, Nando

Sigona and

others.

12<sup>th</sup> July 2013

7-9pm

Film Screening

Young voices: a

selection of

shorts

PRESS RELEASE



POSTERS FOR ALL EXHIBITIONS





INVITATIONS TO ALL EXHIBITIONS



8 April 2013

#### POSTCARDS AT INTERNATIONAL ROMA DAY

DreamMakers Peterborough produced postcards in 5 designs, to celebrate the Roma Day. Postcards were distributed in Peterborough on the International Roma Day.



8 April 2013  
FLAGS AT INTERNATIONAL ROMA DAY  
Artwork by the DreamMakers Newham.







11 December 2012  
GLASGOW EXHIBITION PRIVATE VIEW  
Govanhill Community Baths



13 March 2013  
BROADCAST INTERVIEW AT SUNNY GOVAN  
Glasgow



Spring 2013  
ENGAGE, Issue 32  
London  
The article DreamMakers by Eva Sajovic  
appears in Issue 32 of engage Journal.





26 March 2013  
BOLTON EXHIBITION PRIVATE VIEW  
Market Place

26 April 2013  
CO-CURATING WORKSHOP  
198 Contemporary Arts & Learning, London  
Two young people from each location take part.





**2 May 2013**  
**TO GYPSYLAND EXHIBITION**  
**Tramway, Glasgow**

As part of the ongoing engagement, the DreamMakers Glasgow visited To Gypsyland at Tramway, Glasgow and over 2 days produced a response to Delaine's work. This included an interview with Delaine about her work and Katie Bruce, Producer Curator, Glasgow Life/Glasgow Arts, Gallery of Modern Arts.

**14 May 2013**  
**PETERBOROUGH EXHIBITION PRIVATE VIEW**  
**Thomas Deacon Academy**



14 June 2013  
 LONDON EXHIBITION PRIVATE VIEW  
 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning  
 Photos by Isha Blake.





# **15 June 2013** **LONDON VISIT**

Young people from Glasgow and Bolton who together with other groups came to the private view at 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning stay the night and go on a London visit.





25 June 2013

# **SYMPOSIUM CITIZENSHIP & BELONGING**

## **198 Contemporary Arts and Learning**

In relation to themes from the DreamMakers project with Eva Sajovic, Engin Isin, Gilane Tawadros, Barby Asante, Dr Hilary Faulkner, Philippa Hall, Peter Torak, Agnieszka Paterek-Cotton, Katarzyna Falkiewicz, Brian Foster (ACERT), Kabir Virmani and Sireita Mullings.



2 July 2013  
**REPRESENTATION OF GYPSIES,  
 ROMA AND TRAVELLERS AND THE MEDIA**  
**198 Contemporary Arts and Learning**

Roundtable discussion with Adam Weiss of the AIRE Centre (currently European Roma Rights Centre), Jason Bergen of Migrant Voice, Nadia Manganello of The Big Issue, Andrew Hadley of Momentum, Barby Asante, Eva Sajovic, Delaine Le Bas, Damian LeBas, Keely Mills, Artur Conka of the Community Channel, Ronke Osinowo and Katherine Quarmby. Chaired by Lucie Fremlova.



4 July 2013  
 NEWHAM EXHIBITION PRIVATE VIEW  
 The Hub





12 July 2013  
**YOUNG VOICES: A SELECTION OF SHORTS**  
 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning  
 Film Screening



29 November 2013  
**TO GYPSYLAND EXHIBITION**  
 Metal, Peterborough  
 As part of the ongoing engagement, the DreamMakers Peterborough visited To Gypsyland at Metal, Peterborough, interviewed Delaine about her work and the process behind and produced a response to it.

## CITIZENSHIP AND BELONGING

transcribed and copy edited by Hannah Blumhardt

This transcript is taken from a day-long symposium entitled 'Citizenship and Belonging', which aimed to conceptualise, contextualise and evaluate the project. The symposium was divided into four sessions with four chairs (Gilane Tawadros, Barby Asante, Brian Foster and Sireita Mullings). The transcript below follows the chronological order of the day.

### Session 1

#### Barby

Welcome to 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning. It's been a long journey to bring the DreamMakers together in this exhibition, which has been great and a lot of work. We are pleased to have Engin Isin, Professor of Citizenship, Politics and International Studies and Director of Citizenship, Identities and Governance at the Faculty of Social Sciences at the Open University. We have also got Eva Sajovic, the artist who has worked on this project, and chair Gilane Tawadros, chief executive of DACS (Design and Artists Copyright Society). Gilane is also founding Director of the Institute of International Visual Arts (Inlva).

#### Engin

Thank you for inviting me. It is both a pleasure and privilege to be here. I'm very interested in the project DreamMakers, as well as this space and the activities you are undertaking connecting arts, politics, citizenship and belonging. I want to say a little bit about the kind of work that's taking place in the academy and how it gets connected with the interface between art and politics, citizenship and belonging.

Citizenship, as you may imagine, has been mostly understood in mainstream culture as passage, or the right, to belong to a particular state. It is very state-based, institutional and symbolised, most poignantly, by nothing other than that particular

instrument called the passport. We are asked for our passports every time we cross borders, switch places and so on. But over the last twenty years around the world there has been a lot of interest in migration and travelling; travelling not as in tourism, but as in people who travel, who do not stay put in the place of their birth. They do this for a variety of reasons, whether it's for work, lifestyle, enjoyment or just simply to escape the boundaries that bind them. As soon as this happens people run into a very complex mesh of regulations. These regulations protect borders, nations, and specific ways of doing things.

What we have learned over the last twenty years about migrant experiences of Travellers, travelling people as it were, has been not so much about their particular experiences of how one, for example, translates or negotiates different languages, but how one translates experiences. One is born into a particular language and does not have a choice in that and we call it native. As soon as you switch places for whatever reason, one of the first things one has to negotiate is how to communicate. How does one translate one's experience that evolved in a particular language, to another? That translation is not simply literal translation. It's not just simply switching from one language to another to express the same thing. Because each language has its own conventions and its own norms with

which it speaks about experiences. So, if you learn as I did, for example, Turkish as your native language and then switch to English, things don't translate. So learning how to translate means learning not the other language, but translating experiences.

We have learned much about that in the last twenty years from travelling people and also all the prejudices, xenophobia, misogyny, and racism, ethnocentrism, that these kinds of switches put people into. Many closed boundaries that states protect also use a variety of prejudices to protect those boundaries. So it's not about border controls and passports, it is also culture and cultural homogeneity, cultural uniqueness. Speaking from experience, I now realise people have been told lies. There isn't such a thing as quintessential Canadianness or being quintessentially German, these things have been invented. Through various practices beyond border control they've been inculcated in people's ways of thinking. So it is very real to people. Just because something is invented, such as Britishness, we realise that it doesn't make it unreal. So then travelling becomes cultural translation. How does one negotiate these differences? How does one negotiate one's own invented identity? That's one of the things that one experiences: what you were taught as native and ingrained is not so. You are much

less pure, much less invented than you were first told.

I grew up with Turkish nationalism and Turkish nationalism is one of the worst as the world goes, in terms of its own belief of racialised purity and so on. I come from a family that is anything but racially pure. My father is of Cypriot origin, with a mixture of Greek and Turkish identities. Also different religious mix in there. He himself migrated to Turkey from Cyprus. My mother is from a migrant family. I don't know if anyone knows about this, but in 1920's there was a tragic moment in Turkish Greek nationalism, where there was a population exchange. Basically, there was a rise of nationalism in both Greece and Turkey. Greece and Turkey, as states, entered into a treaty, saying that 'you claim yours and I will claim mine'. They told people, like the people of Crete, that they have to make a choice. Well, how do people make a choice when their everyday lives and experiences are not pure? They did not think of themselves as Turks or Greek. My mother's family, was actually Greek. They could speak both Turkish and Greek and they chose to go to Istanbul. So my mother comes from that mixed background.

For me translation started very young, trying to figure out 'why is Greek music playing at home?' and my mother saying to me, 'don't mention this and make sure that

you speak Turkish', not quite figuring out what there was to hide. But then, when your mother is telling you this is what you should do, you first instinct is, 'ok, I'd better go with that'. Although later I think you begin to negotiate that, call that into question. So, in a way, I'm even contradicting myself as to be exposed to the experience of migration and travelling one actually does not have to move much in our world. Our world is already a world of travelling ideas, travelling experiences. Before I even took many steps, I realised that I had to already encounter the problem of translation or the question of translation. How do I translate my mother's experiences, my father's experiences, into my own? Those were the questions I had to tackle, not being able to have the language at that time. So, many years forward there was a fixed interest in citizenship for me.

Of course, I was always intrigued by the question, 'what do people do to be invited, to invest themselves in this particular identity?' Why do some people develop a thick sense of these identities, so much so that they find it non-negotiable? The 'I am British, do as I say' kind of thickness or 'I am German'. By contrast others are much more fluid, in flux with it. Almost there is the sense that these are the things that as we move through our lives we have to negotiate. It's a give and take. So, what is it? Is it just travelling experience?



For example, my own trajectory began with a family that already had experience of travel. Or maybe it's not even that. What is it that states, education, systems do to protect borders and educate people to make investments in these pure identities, and why this is? I became interested in that question as a question of citizenship. To me citizenship was not so much the passport one holds but the investments one chooses to make in life. And how do people make those choices that lead them down either the thick loyalties path or thin loyalties of various kinds (but no less rich for that)?

In academic terms we have begun to articulate this question. I've been involved in the academic aspect of this for more than twenty years. When I entered, by accident, this small field called 'citizenship studies', it was dominated by lawyers, political scientists and people who just thought that nation states existed from time immemorial, boundaries existing as real as rivers and mountains, and that the main question was studying laws that regulate citizenship. I struggled through and kept saying that when you understand citizenship like that you miss so much of the social, negotiated, anthropological aspects.

The field is much less lonely twenty years on. I think the most welcoming aspect (and that's why I was really excited when Eva and Barby invited

me for this) is that not only anthropologists and sociologists became interested, but also artists. Art is a different language to science. Not necessarily better or worse, but it brings a different lens onto human experience and provides different languages by which to express that experience. And in expression it brings into focus a certain richness. Even though anthropologists and sociologists are much more attuned to human experience than some other fields or approaches, art brings into focus the richness of those experiences that sciences and social sciences, humanities have difficulty articulating.

My first entry into citizenship was historical. I learned a lot about how in other cultures historically they negotiated these differences, developed languages. I realised there is so much to do. For example, in Greek archaic poetry I found incredibly poignant expressions of Greek politics of citizenship, which is not less valuable than Aristotle and what he says in his politics. So I got drawn into more poetry rather than just simply political philosophy. That was my really important entry into the relationship between politics and art. In the end, when I was writing a history of citizenship, without really realising, it became a history of poetry and its relationship to politics. I ended up opening every chapter in the book with a poem and then worked my way

through how that poem came into being.

So in the interface between humanities, social sciences and arts there is much to be gained. So much so that as we sit in a room such as this, it is vitally important to start with the experiences of people negotiating that language that I've just described. This discussion serves two functions that are really significant. One, that we're not alone. I, for one, for a long time felt as though I was alone in that path because when you don't have opportunities to express and share, you get on with life without reflecting much on the translation business you are doing. By sharing with others, you begin to more consciously reflect on the fact that we're all fellow travellers on the road of translating our experiences, and then you begin to focus on what it means to be constantly translating those experiences.

The second one is, of course, developing language of these translated or travelling experiences. Language inevitably is a public and social product. We produce languages collaboratively, together. There never was such a thing as private language. If I am right that art has access to experience and expresses these negotiations of translation in a particularly effective way, then it is also significant to develop the language of art collectively and socially, in communication and collaboration,

not only with each other, but also with humanities and social sciences. I think humanities and social sciences will be much poorer if we don't fully open ourselves to artistic expressions and artistic engagement with experiences. And the other way around, I think artistic expressions and language also can learn from all sorts of comparative studies of other places and in history and so on.

### **Gilane**

You raised a lot of very important themes and questions which seem to connect and resonate very much with the work Eva has been doing with the young people in this project. I just wanted to start by picking up on some of the themes which you talked about and two particular ones which struck me in your keynote talk but also as I walked around the galleries. One is this question of how one negotiates difference. I guess the starting point for you and Eva and the young people involved in this project is that difference is something to be negotiated? Maybe it's worth just pausing there and stepping back because in contrast to that is the assumption that there is no difference to be negotiated at all: what you refer to as the way in which cultural homogeneity informs borders and protects us against difference as much as a kind of legal regulator framework and set of rules. In my own experience I remember as a child having been also a migrant and a political exile,

desperately wanting to belong, wanting to have that assumption of sameness and belonging before realising that actually that wasn't such a safe or desirable place to want either.

So I think there is always that tension between a desire for belonging and homogeneity before one gets to an understanding also of the possibilities of difference. Perhaps that's partly because in a sense the things you've been talking about, negotiating differences and the difficulty of translation, operate on two levels at the same time. On one level we have an experience of globalisation where things travel very easily: capital moves effortlessly across boundaries, certain people's objects, commodities, move seamlessly between different spaces. But then there is another level of movement, which is constantly blocked, protected, resisted.

The other thing I just want to pick up on was this idea of translation and your insight around the visual. One thing that's always struck me, working in the visual arts and with artists, is that, particularly in a culture like Britain (which is very literary and engaged with language, and the word is the predominant mode of communication), the visual is seen to be subordinate to the linguistic. But actually the same difficulty of translation happens with the visual and also the same possibilities: the

visual allows the space for that negotiation of difference, for that gap between what's immediately known, immediately understood, immediately comfortable. I've always thought contemporary art probably is the opposite of what Henri Matisse, the painter said - it's not the comfortable chair. It's actually the complete opposite: it makes you uncomfortable. You have to work at it. There's a gap between you and that object, this made form, and you have to figure out 'how do I connect with it, how do I make sense of it?' In this sense we see this articulated in these galleries. It is that continuous process, almost a default among the young people and anyone who's had that experience. As you say, lots of us have had that experience but it's not legitimised in public forms of discourse and our perception of what citizenship means. These things somehow seem to be an illegitimate discourse if you like, in comparison with more formal discourses of belonging, of citizenship, of what constitutes statehood and belonging.

### Engin

Thanks, those are helpful reminders. You identify two very significant issues. One of them is that this negotiating of difference and translation is not experienced the same by all people. This is one of the paradoxes of our time. On the one hand we live under illusion and fantasy of globalisation and its virtues. But when it

comes to actual practices we realise that globalisation is easier for some than others. There's the emergence of an all new class, sometimes it's called the 'super rich', who experience the world very differently as travellers. Ordinary people come up against all sorts of resistance and prejudice; it is not really the same for them. Maybe the two are related phenomena; as some people's lives are made easier, they must be made difficult for others. Then we have to look at the logic of why that kicks into place.

The second thing that you raise, you're so right, especially living in England, this primacy of the spoken word and the primacy of linguistic competence rather than visual competence. It's just so deeply ingrained that even the outsiders, such as myself in the few years that I've been here, are unable to just break out and question 'why this incredible focus on linguistic competence?' So much so that, as you know, citizenship tests now are in linguistic competence as there are no other competencies that migrants can master and that could be their pathway into citizenship. It's so singular. This is perhaps also a politics of visibility. I really like that point, me also being an amateur photographer on the side, that is particularly significant for why I find photography the language that is liberating, or a space to escape from that linguistic empire, as it were.

### Eva

I would like to pick up on both at the same time. What I felt about the project was that the visual language was actually the tool bringing the people together and making connections between people, exploring perhaps similar themes, like religion or culture, traditions...for example, dance. Certain themes were coming out of the project that allowed a person that immigrated from Pakistan to relate to somebody who immigrated from the Czech Republic. So it was very powerful and in particular, for example, in Glasgow (where language was not very well present as the young people only recently immigrated to the UK, Scotland), the tools of photography, sound and video were the democratic forms of bringing people together, really finding a way to communicate and perhaps just to share little moments that then, when we revisited them, became big moments.

### Gilane

It's interesting what you're saying, that the experience of working with these young people in the project shows how these ideas of connection and difference don't have to be mutually exclusive. I think that's one of the things certainly within the history of art and cultural expression - the idea that certain categories of art have universal relevance while others are very specific or stuck in silos. What's very exciting about what you're

saying is that possibility of finding connections across cultures and difference without, in any way, invalidating those differences and those specific experiences, but actually reinforcing that.

#### **Eva**

And also opening new paths in space (whether you understand space literally or symbolically). For example, going to interview somebody at the court and the new kinds of language that developed there, not spoken language, but just through the moments that happened. For example, how the person at the court was perhaps able to view the young Roma differently, through the interest that the young people were showing at what he does and what the court does. The new paths being started I thought were very important and charged, opening new discourses (or at least a willingness to do so) as a disruption to old, deeply embedded narratives.

#### **Gilane**

Is this perhaps tying with what Engin was saying about formal structures of citizenship and statehood having to negotiate other forms of belonging and participation and civic engagement which aren't framed or contained by those very... I mean the court is a very powerful expression of that, architecturally and politically and legally.

#### **Eva**

Exactly! These kinds of invisible lines running through the work are very much pulled out.

#### **Gilane**

You mentioned art, archaic poetry and the connection between poetry and politic...and I was struck when both of you were speaking that there are actually some new possibilities that are emerging, that it's not just about crossing borders anymore. In fact, what we've seen in the last two or three years within the nation state, within the city state as it were, are expressions of difference and different kinds of political imagination, whether that's happening in the Occupy movement outside St. Paul's or at Documenta, the big five year exhibition that happens in Kassel, Germany. There were the Occupy tents outside the Fridericianum museum, while very wealthy collectors and curators flocked into the exhibition. Within the nation state or the city state there are competitive narratives about what citizenship and belonging and participation mean. Is this project and the things we're talking about here pointing to another intervention?

#### **Engin**

I'm collecting my thoughts. It's interesting you say the Occupy movement and also indignados in Spain and Greece, right across Europe. Throughout what began with Tahrir

Square in 2011 and went, over two years, all the way through to Syntagma Square to Sol de Madrid Square, the mainstream media rounded on this notion that these things were too multifarious, too fragmented to mean anything, in so far as they failed to develop a singular message. This has been hammered time and again. But I've actually been to these squares as these events were taking place, from St Paul's to Madrid to Tahrir Square (I didn't go to New York), and through these experiences you realise that in fact their significant contribution was to resist developing a homogenous language. This was not for lack of better thinking; these people actually deliberately resisted articulating singular, homogenous language because this is precisely what is wrong with the State as we experience it. So as forms of politics that called organised governmental politics into question, they didn't want to produce the same politics by articulating, for example, the hierarchical structure that you have a leader, you have lieutenants, you have the masses and then the leader gives representation to what the masses say and that message is singular, thereby reproducing the State politics. Instead they chose multiplicity and plurality as language and they kept it at that.

I was amazed by how much focus the media placed on this notion of singularity and the same thing was

repeated for example in the Turkish case and now in Brasil. Even people in Academia don't feel inhibited to say that these movements will amount to nothing unless they articulate the message, a particular politics, that singular politics. For me, and this is I think where visuality comes into place, these squares and streets were also significant in keeping languages multiple, rather than one sort of dominant narrative (even if it was framed as social science, philosophy or this or that). The visual has been really significant in maintaining that distance between what is experienced and what is communicated. This all contrasts with the very nature of modern capitalism, which depends on singular homogenising, advertising languages, the strong will to unify messages in order to circulate an easy to sell, easy to commodify message. Only in so far as you use that language, you will be successful.

#### **Eva**

I would like to relate what you just said to the project and the exhibition itself. The exhibition itself was a very important, connecting moment. The project happened in four locations, about which I will talk more later. After every set of workshops we exhibited the work in these locations, to celebrate in the community and to make it available to friends, families and so on. In general, the concept of the exhibition is its invitation for the viewer to come in and connect on a



personal level. For me that happens differently for every single individual because we are all different. That was the point we were working with from the outset of the project. We wanted to work with individuals as individuals as well as a group (we were working with this idea of group identity as well). But primarily everybody's experience is very important and that's what we'd like to convey. So there wasn't a definite methodology used. It had to be very fluid and responsive to the participants and the experiences they were bringing and their skills. We also decided to split the text so you didn't have text from one person, rather glimpses are interspersed with other people's images so, as a viewer, you travel through this between sound, video, visual and make your journey, create your narrative, with the route you take throughout the work.

### **Gilane**

I'm thinking as you are both speaking that there are a lot of politicians navel-gazing and worrying about why people aren't voting in Europe and elections, why people seem to refuse to participate and engage with political processes as they currently exist. I'm wondering about whether actually what we see here in the way, Eva, you've conceived of the installation of this work, and you Barby, how you've conceived of the project, that actually what we have is not so much a failure of politics but a failure of imagining

different forms of participation and engagement; what is here is a kind of resistance to that homogeneity.

### **Barby**

It was interesting what you were saying around citizenship and the idea of multiple voices. Going back to the politics and participation, meeting these young people, they have been totally immersed in this and perhaps don't think of their own voices being political or the work they've produced being political. When you think about the way citizenship is, you described citizenship in education, what does education do to serve nationhood? Citizenship is not a very fluid subject for young people. They do teach them a form of politics but, that form of politics, that's not a very satisfactory form for young people. One of the things I've been frustrated about is having a young person who is constantly trying to think about how you describe yourself, your politics. Simultaneously a lot of young people are fearful about how they can express their voices. There's something in this that I've certainly seen with some of the young people. This opportunity to move into different spaces, to open up spaces (Eva was talking about visiting a court, for example), to cross boundaries that the young people never see nor can cross. This to me is extremely powerful politically. Going back to your point about the government; basically the arts being cut, these kinds

of projects being cut, these opportunities, it feels very important to find a different kind of language for the young people to be able to express themselves.

### **Sireita**

Political participation within the arts is often taken for granted from both the policy maker perspective and even the practitioner and participant perspective – how politically involved they are in articulating their voice, their position, their social position. I think one of the conversations that we probably need to have is how we can have all of these people: a) recognised and involved in this process and b) taken seriously. Not just producing but going beyond political art for activism. Irrespective of how the work speaks, it should be thought about as a serious engagement in politics.

### **Gilane**

Yes and a constructive, productive contribution to imagining multiple forms of political participation and positioning perhaps.

### **Mark**

This is more of a reflection about the aesthetics within the visual language and the choice to use documentary photo journalism as an approach, whether that choice of medium allows for the celebration of difference while simultaneously cutting through difference. It has allowed the image to not

be bound up in symbol, metaphor or the material stuff of paint and the like. There is something in the process and immediacy of the captured image that supports commentary. Turning the camera on yourself, it's two things at the same time, saying we're all the same but also we're all different.

### **Hilary**

I think I understand what you mean. It's expressing difference without judging it. Although perhaps the word 'judge' is too strong to say, but it's celebrating difference. You talked about desire for belonging and individuals who seek to learn about what that cultural identity is and I wanted to ask how strong that is in every individual? It must be bound by your own personal experiences or that of your parents or grandparents. In my case, I'm white British, therefore, I perhaps feel more connected to a place and the language and yet I think I had a desire to travel rather than stay the same.

As a teacher I've encountered young people from all parts of the world who have very different stories (some of them very traumatic). Being involved in this project has enabled us as teachers, when we don't always have time, to sit and think about the theory behind what we do in projects like this. Although we're always conscious we don't want to focus on ourselves or think about ourselves because it is about the children, involvement in the

project enabled us to think about our own individuality and our own identity. It raised so many questions I'd not thought about before, about what we do within citizenship in schools, what the course is and why it is, who's defining what the curriculum should be and why. I think 'citizenship' has been seen as just the latest in something for personal and social education. It's something that gets done by certain teachers who quite like perhaps the methodology that's used more than the subject material. They have a good report. Kids are all clever. But I thought, we're going back to school tomorrow, what will they do in the citizenship lessons? Should we review it? Is it political? Probably not. Because it links to this desire to equality, which can mean that we lose that sense of interest in difference by making everything seem the same and equal. We lose that sense of uniqueness. And I wonder what is happening sometimes.

#### **Gilane**

I think what you're saying is hugely important. It connects to what Engin and Eva were saying. In a sense the young people involved in the Dream-Makers project have had no option but to engage with their questions of identity and belonging and statehood and citizenship. They've been forced. In this way it is like Engin's registering around Greek music playing at home but which couldn't have been articulated publicly. So, automatically

that sets up in you, already as a child, a split between private and public space, legitimate, illegitimate. What strikes me about what these young people are articulating is a very deep and profound understanding of that split and those tensions and those contradictions and paradoxes. I don't think they are the unique preserve of the young people in this room, or those who had to experience that because it's been forced on them from a very young age. I think that it happens to people at different points in their lives and it is about perhaps the questioning of what is validating and what is not, around class, around gender, around your life, around your sexuality, around all areas of difference or anything which distinguishes between what is a legitimated, validated experience and what isn't.

#### **Barby**

This made me think of teaching as also a political action and how it's been depoliticised over the years.

#### **Gilane**

Or more politicised in a way because there has been so much attention on what is taught and what isn't.

#### **Engin**

You are right, paradoxically, both of you. Both politicised, re-politicised, de-politicised. This government and what they are doing with education, in particular history, is deeply politicising. On the other hand it's deeply

de-politicising the contents. So it's obvious that they've identified this as a political battle to wage the hearts and minds of young people in what kind of history.

But I wanted to quickly mention something. You point to this tension between sameness and difference, the actual necessity of both. That's why I think if we simply understand either politics or art or science as just about expressing difference, we would be losing something. The notion of difference acknowledges that there is also sameness, there is also identification and a sharing of certain common things. As we negotiate differences we also articulate what is common, what brings us together in what we share and what we decide to keep different. But the problem with sameness is when it declares itself as non-negotiable, closing the dialogue and creating a monologue. So a commitment to being open to dialogue is something that we could say (paradoxically) is non-negotiable. This is a value that we have to declare adherence to. This is what brings us as humans together so that we can actually articulate and negotiate our differences. One could reflect on this from the family politics: any parent who thinks that they are going to raise a child who is identical to what they imagine a child should be is off to bad parenthood. We know that this is not a good path to follow.

#### **Gilane**

This has been fantastic and my head is spinning. Eva and Engin, thank you all very much for starting a conversation.

## Session 2

### Barby

This session is going to introduce some of the contexts and places in which Eva has been working. We are very pleased also to have Hilary and Pip from Thomas Deacon Academy, Petr Torak from Peterborough and also Agnieszka and Kasia from East London. They all work with the young people. Unfortunately we don't have anybody from Bolton and Glasgow, but we do have something that WSREC did with the Slovak Roma group in Glasgow. So we'll start off with this, which also gives a little bit of a context to what it's like in Glasgow.

### Eva

We decided to choose Glasgow, Bolton, Peterborough and Newham because we found out that there was a significant influx of new Roma populations in those locations. We started and put the groups together mainly through partners who were closer to the issues prevailing in those locations and who also understood what group age would be most beneficial to work with.

The project worked with young people between the ages of 13 and 20. It varied quite a lot; in Glasgow everyone was around 13-15 or more 14, 15. In Bolton the young people were between 18 and 21. In Newham, the youngest group, it was more

like 13. In Peterborough it was very interesting because the group was bringing together people across ages, from 13-16.

We worked from within a school in two locations. In these places, the young people were literally taken out of classes to take part in the project, which was a big commitment from that perspective. In Bolton we worked with young people, some of them were still studying at Bolton College. Others joined the project because they heard about it through their friends and they came saying 'I really want to be part of the project and my friend wants to be part of this project, so can we just come?' The project took place during half-term breaks. The young people showed real commitment and that was beautiful because it was their own time and they stuck with it throughout and worked from 9-6 most days. It was very different in Newham where the project took place outside the school context, either during half-term or after school, and that created different dynamics.

### Hilary

I'm Hilary from Thomas Deacon Academy and this is my colleague and good friend, Pip. We've worked together on a number of projects and DreamMakers is one of them. I was asked by Eva if I would talk a little bit about the school and what projects we've been involved with

re Roma. Our school was opened in 2007 and I think at the time it was the biggest single Academy in the country. It was a new build and it was three former secondary schools merging into a brand new school on one site. They were three very different schools. Two had been previously under-achieving; students had been under-performing, the buildings were in poor state of repair or there was insufficient space. There was one other school, the largest of the three, which had about 1000 students at the time, which was involved in managing them. The whole process of opening the new school was in itself social engineering to ensure that the young people that came together from the three previous schools would work in classes cooperatively and around the building and at the same time build a community within the school and be a part of the wider community. Whilst that wasn't really articulated very explicitly, that's essentially what had to happen. So there were a number of steps taken to ensure we had a successful launch and that's still going on. My role in the school as a community strategist is part of that.

The building looks very exciting and space-agey. It's only one building, everything goes on inside there. It was slightly controversial when we opened because we don't have playgrounds, so the children don't go outside; it's 11-18 and even the young ones don't go outside and kick

a football around because the emphasis is very much on raising achievement and working hard. We had one and a half hour lessons, didn't have breaks. So it felt pretty full on I think for everybody in the school, students and staff.

We held the DreamMakers' exhibition in June. We had five young people in the project who were invited to take part. We were, in a sense, forced to select from two or three year groups because of the focus on examinations. We didn't select older students because of their examinations and so on. We had three Roma children in the project, Ernest from the Czech Republic, Victoria from Poland and Eva from Slovakia. And then we had a boy from an English Traveller background, Connor, and Sophie, who's the oldest of the group, who wants to be a journalist, who's white British.

One of the outcomes of the project was how they each got to know much more about each other's background, culture, and they've become friends. During a normal school day they wouldn't really encounter each other, they wouldn't know each other because there are over 2000 children in the school, it's a very big organisation. It's a bit like going inside an airport sometimes with all the movement around the school. So having a very small group of students was fantastic for them because they had an opportunity to really reflect on



their own identity and that of others. What they have produced in terms of the exhibition and what they've each got out of it was massive. It's going to have a legacy and affect other project work we can do. As a school we've learnt, even if it's at a level of how to exhibit, how to market, how to engage the local community. So there's been a number of outcomes that we perhaps hadn't anticipated, as well as the success for each individual child involved.

As a school we don't have many Roma students, although there are more than 2000 in the city of Peterborough (I think there are 50 odd primary schools and 12 or 13 secondary schools) and for a number of reasons, partly to do with where they live and selection for secondary school, at our last count we only have 21 on roll (7 English Gypsy, 3 Travellers, 4 Czech Roma, 6 Slovak and 1 Polish Roma). Looking at the information about students coming into the school in September, there are 4 in year 7. So we don't have the issues that I think sometimes the press and certain other education authorities have explored re Roma children's poor attendance in schools. The attendance of our students is very good and there haven't been any tensions with other ethnic groups in school.

#### **Pip**

But I think that's because of how

multi-racial the school is in the first place.

#### **Hilary**

Yes, I think we perhaps don't always acknowledge that we must be doing something right because we don't tend to get behaviour issues, racism in school. Nor in the wider community where we can say 'Oh look they're Thomas Deacon Academy students' if they've taken their problems outside the classroom, outside the school.

The activities we've got involved with over the last five years... we organised an evening to celebrate achievement for Gypsy Roma children. We invited primary and secondary schools to inform us of who the young people are in their schools who either had very, very good attendance or who had had some success in the curriculum, whether that be in school subjects or something else. We had quite an interesting response: some schools weren't prepared to tell us the data and some were very enthusiastic and said it's something that perhaps should happen on an annual basis, that the local authority should organise and they should do that for other language or ethnic groups. We have a large Pakistani heritage community in Peterborough. It's more settled, they've been there much longer and they have organisations that every year have an achievement evening and dinner to award young people who've done extremely well in

GCSE and A-levels and so on. Some of the teachers from some of the other schools in Peterborough have said we should be doing that for Roma too, to celebrate their successes. It was very well supported. Petr was there, he supported bringing dance groups from Kent and musicians from Peterborough. At the time we thought this perhaps could be the beginning of something that Peterborough does annually.

We also hosted a Roma dance group that was organised by the young people, for young people, across Peterborough schools which has since moved to one of the other community schools. And we've had a Roma story-teller, Richard O'Neill, in school working with some of our younger students, year 8 students (12-13 year olds) who've been involved in a Comenius project about fairytales. He came in and talked about his background, how he got into story-telling, and enthused so much that they went away and tried to write stories and used that within their project which they then took to the partner schools in Slovakia and Germany. So he's become a contact that we'd like to work with again.

And obviously we got involved with the DreamMakers. As a result of that we're waiting to hear whether we will be successful in receiving funding in another Comenius multilateral project with schools in Europe called

'Who Do We Think We Are'. It is really about exploring youth culture and young people's identity. It's not fully planned because the whole point is that the young people are involved in the organisation and they set the aims and objectives as much as the teachers do.

We're also considering providing opportunities to raise sixth formers' awareness about issues that affect people in Europe, so they're thinking a little bit outside the box so their lives aren't just geared to passing examinations and going to university but that they are in some cases confronted with what life is like for other young people in other parts of the world. I think it's making them more internationally aware and perhaps more politically aware than the taught curriculum necessarily does. So that's something that we want to explore further with Eva.

One other outcome of the Dream-Makers project has been successfully linking with some of the families who are perhaps more difficult to reach, more difficult to engage with, not for language reasons necessarily, but perhaps because of a feeling of intimidation coming in to school or a sense of 'oh well the teachers know what they're doing, we don't need to come in'. That's not just in the Roma and the Gypsy and the Traveller communities, that's in other language and ethnic groups as

well, including White British; it's not specific to one group. But having met some of the family members of some of the students in the project and seeing how proud they are of their child taking part and standing up and making speeches in front of groups of adults and how, by showcasing their identity and their backgrounds in a very public way within the school and within the central library in Peterborough, I think we've made a start in establishing a strong link with some of those families.

I must say, all of the students love working with Eva, they connected with her straight away. We mustn't underestimate that - that really is fantastic to see, how they first of all had to feel comfortable about working with each other and also with somebody they've never met before. But after two weeks they're all friends, it's superb.

### **Petr**

My involvement in the project was to liaise with the kids and also be part of an interview which was conducted with myself. I was asked to talk about how I got where I am currently and I kind of feel it's how Nelson Mandela described: 'The Long Walk to Freedom'. Not only to freedom in a security sense but also freedom of releasing the potential of an individual. I was born in the Czech Republic to a Roma father and a Roma mother. The situation in the Czech Republic

is that Roma, mainly Roma people, are not integrated but they are being assimilated, and this is how I grew up. You shouldn't speak your own language, you shouldn't behave all the way people behave - dancing on the street and being lively - you should obey rules and this and that (obviously rules, cultural rules). It was just put into a young person's head and you tend to forget your culture.

From there, I've then studied Law Academy. But still, even though I felt like 'I've got my own country, I know where I belong', one wasn't part of that culture because we were being constantly attacked by a group of skinheads. There was a point where my father said that's enough, after I was beaten up, my mum was beaten up. He just bought us tickets and said 'in a few days' time we are leaving the country'. So we left the country and only then I've realised what is here, what it means to live as a free person. I was able to work my way through from the very bottom, working on a field as an immigrant, picking up potatoes for 16 hours a day, through the customer service, security and then finally to policing, something that I've always aspired to. In Czech Republic you're always put into a certain box or drawer, and told 'oh you'll stay here'. But only being here, living in the UK, I've realised that it's limitless, you set the limits yourself, you are not put in a drawer. This is what changed my attitude. Now being the

first, and unfortunately only, Roma police officer from the EU countries, I see there is no limit, I see myself as a Chief Councillor one day. I don't limit myself to that and if I get half way I'll be still satisfied, so that's a change.

There's also a change in the sense of belonging. I had a sense of belonging in the Czech Republic but then I moved here and kind of lost the sense of belonging because now I am not Czech, I am not English, I am not Roma. I now feel there's the traveling blood within me where I feel, we've got a saying: 'home is where you hang your hat'. This is how I see it. It doesn't matter if I'm in Peterborough, if I'll be in Kenya (where I thought one time to move). It changed completely my aspect. To put this into context with the project, what I like is giving people chances, empowering them to do things, to feel important, not to be only an object of research, but to be empowered to demonstrate what they see and how they see it works. Thank you for involving me.

### **Agnieszka**

My name is Agnieszka and this is Kasia, she will tell you a little bit about her project in a little while. We both work for a voluntary organisation called The Children's Society. In Newham, we have been working with the Roma community since 1996. In those days, the Roma community were coming as asylum seekers to the UK. They were applying for

asylum, claiming discrimination in their countries of origin. In those days in Newham, which is East London, we mostly had Roma from Poland and Romania, seldom from other countries like Slovakia and Czech Republic. It was very unlikely that any of the Roma would be granted refugee status in those days. Their claims of discrimination were not believed by the UK Home Office. The countries they were coming from were considered to be "safe countries", therefore the assumption was that the State was able to protect them. As such, they should stay where they were rather than come to the UK.

Most of our families in those days were preoccupied with their immigration status and didn't really look beyond "today". They felt that they lived in the UK on borrowed time and that at any time of the day or night the UK Border Agency officers would knock on their door and deport them back to where they came from. As such, they didn't really see themselves as being part of the UK's culture because they didn't think they would stay here very long. It wasn't until the 2003 Family Amnesty, where most of our families were able to apply and subsequently get Indefinite Leave To Remain, when I personally noticed the big shift in perception of the Roma young people. We had young people who were perhaps out of education before who suddenly realised 'well now that

we have Indefinite Leave To Remain we can actually start thinking about our future in this country' and they started thinking, 'well what do I do with myself?' We had young people who perhaps were out of education for several years coming back to us saying 'please could you help us get college places?' There was this big shift in thinking and people started wanting to be involved, wanting to settle in the UK and wanting to contribute.

At that time we had a project that supported Roma families with immigration, but also general things like welfare, education, health. Through the project we noticed that most of our families were really just preoccupied with immigration, whilst their children were not accessing education. So we set up a new project that would specifically support them with access to education. Subsequently, through that project, we discovered profound health inequalities within the Roma communities, so we decided to address that, which has led us to set up a new project supporting Roma families with their health needs.

Since the accession of the A8 countries in 2004, we saw less newcomers from Poland and more Roma coming from Slovakia, especially in Newham, and then maybe the Czech Republic. We do work with some Romanian Roma families, but they tend to be located in other parts of

London rather than Newham. Their situation is somewhat different from other Roma where they either have the Indefinite Leave To Remain or who came as EU citizens following the accession. The migrants with the leave to remain have access to full state support, whereas the EU citizens from A8 countries have had their restrictions lifted and are thus able to work in the UK or claim benefits. For the Romanians and Bulgarians, the restrictions are still in place and we see a lot of destitution as a result.

Drawing on the DreamMakers project and the theme of today's discussion around citizenship and belonging, Newham is a very diverse area of London and the Roma communities there blend in quite well. People generally would not know they are Roma and assume that Roma are Asian. So from that point of view Roma in Newham don't get discriminated against so much. But despite that, because of all the history of persecution in their home countries, many Roma are often unwilling to openly share their ethnic origin with others. In a way, they tend to lead double lives. They have their private life, during which they are allowed to be who they are, and they have their public life where they tend to behave in a certain way in order to be safe and hide their identity, a lot of the time for fear of discrimination. It goes to the extent that they have two different names; a name that is used

within the family and friends circle and a public name which they want non-Roma to know them by.

Being part of DreamMakers very much allowed for the more private part of life of our young Roma to come out to the public. What we see in here is very much who they really are. We are getting a glimpse into their life, their identity and into their culture, something that is normally very much hidden, which we, as non-Roma wouldn't necessarily have a chance to observe.

### **Kasia**

I joined the Children's Society in 2008 and I've worked for a few different projects, but mostly with Roma young people and Roma from Poland and Slovakia. I'm supporting them with education and health issues and also trying to engage young people in positive activities and arts, hence the DreamMakers project and our partnership with Eva.

Previously when we had a discussion and introduction in the morning, I was trying to think about my project and what I actually do. I realised that in my role I'm trying to facilitate families and young people's induction to their new life here in the UK. For example, if we have a new family that arrives in the UK, quite often I'm the first point of contact to them and I explain what the rules here are, how things are done here, how they're

different from their home countries. As I'm from Poland myself, it makes me slightly like an 'insider' to them; I have a good understanding of where they're coming from. So even if I'm not Roma, there's still a common link and I think that allows them to trust me and to follow my advice. This is a great advantage in my work. For instance, families quite often say 'oh is it really true?' and then I say 'yes, yes, these are the rules and if you don't do this...' and they are likely to accept it and follow the rules as a result.

I'm supporting Roma families and young people with accessing health and education mainstream services as well as helping young people with their attainment and achievement in schools. I'm working with teachers, doing home visits, outreach visits. Also, other professionals, e.g. from social care or other agencies, call me for advice. For example they say 'we have this new Roma family and there's been a report of some kind of anti-social behavior, would you help us to go and meet them?' So I think people are still a little bit apprehensive and they don't know how to approach new Roma families and I believe that me going along with them to do a home visit helps a lot. I am able to make a link with the family and take the case on and support them throughout. For example, if they're not in school or not registered at the GP, I'll support them to register.



We had eight young people who took part in the DreamMakers project: two Polish Roma, four Slovak Roma and two Polish young people. We're not linked with any schools as we are a charity project and we had to run activities throughout a half-term break. These were four quite intensive days during which Eva was training young people with media skills. We then continued with the evening sessions which were unfortunately not that successful because they were run after-school and sometimes young people's attendance was poor. Yet, we've made it. I think the best session that we've had was coming here to meet Delaine Le Bas and talk about Roma Gypsy Traveller identities. Even though we only had two Polish young people coming here it was really nice how they were able to connect with the concept and see the artwork around. I also enjoyed going to one of the young people's houses where we had the chance to talk to the whole family. Parents were really proactive and they invited us to their private space to talk about their culture and life in the UK. I think that it was possible because we've worked with them for many years and they trust us to talk about sensitive topics such as their experiences of migration.

#### **Barby**

It's really quite brilliant to get the context and also to bring a lot of the thinking and conversations we had

this morning into what Engin was presenting: reality, an on-the-ground way of seeing how a lot of this translation and negotiation is happening and how you all are supporting these young people through that or thinking about it in a very practical way. It's really important for a family to affirm their status and have their status changed from 'immigrant' to 'migrant' but for the young people it's a very different kind of story. Petr's experiences are also kind of part of that change, or it reflects that potential because for people who are considered travelling people, I often feel from meeting the young people that actually this point, this place might be a real stopping place for them. So it's quite interesting to hear how these young people are embracing the places and this opportunity.

Some of the other things that came up was this idea of a split which has happened in so many different kinds of migrant communities. When you were talking about the name changing. This name changing happened in my own family. It's happened in Jewish families when they came just out of the war and names were emphasised. But you said something that was really interesting, that in Czech Republic it was assimilation and integration and I think that this is something important. In Britain the word that always troubles me whenever I hear it from Government is this idea of 'tolerance'. Actually my skin

crawls when I hear this word: tolerance.

One of the things that we've been talking about with this negotiation and this acceptance and things like that, it seems that some of these things could happen in your school environment too. Even though it's not the school with the most Roma children, it's nevertheless something that is being addressed and it's something that is being thought about and considered perhaps even before it becomes a much more prevalent situation in Peterborough. In Scotland in particular, what we noticed is that it's quite new: just to speak to some people where they said something like there were 63 different kinds of communities in Glasgow and then you speak about somewhere like Peterborough where there's like 300 or London where there's so many more. It's such a new experience for Scotland to be having a diverse community, so it's very new. And ironically, most of those new communities all seem to go to Govanhill; it was Jewish and then it's Pakistani and there are a lot of people that seem to resonate with this area.

#### **Sireita**

I'm very interested why this is. Did you come across any narratives perhaps that give insight as to how it is that the communities got to Govanhill and why it is that they chose to go to Scotland?

#### **Petr**

From what I know, this apparently comes down to what used to be known as a 'dispersed area' by Home Office, and Peterborough used to be one.

#### **Sireita**

So, second question, why is it that people go to Scotland as opposed to other parts of the UK?

#### **Petr**

From the Roma perspective I can see it's a very much family-oriented thing. When we first came to the UK, wherever you were placed by the Home Office, then the rest of the families and friends join you, wherever you were.

#### **Eva**

And the creation of a ghetto, as one of the councillors who spoke at the opening of our exhibition in Glasgow said, 'Govanhill is a concern because it's becoming a ghetto'. But why is it becoming a ghetto? We need to turn that statement around into a question because there isn't enough provision for the families who follow, who are used to living as communities, not as individual families, there isn't provision to allow that to happen, for families to live together in an area rather than completely different sides of town.

#### **Barby**

I don't understand why people think

it's so strange though because I mean that's what's happened in London in particular areas. In Brixton and Golders Green we've got Jewish communities, with Stockwell there are Portuguese communities. I think it goes back to that whole thing of 'tolerance', you know this idea of tolerance and acceptance. People go to places where they feel safe.

### **Sireita**

With regards to the Brixton community, one of the reasons it became known as the Caribbean community, as far as I understand, is partly based on the positioning of the labour exchange. So upon the arrival of West Indian people to the UK the labour exchange on Coldharbour Lane was a key place where they would go for work. They then settled in the surrounding areas where their family members would follow. That's why I was asking, what was the pulling force...

### **Petr**

But still, there are quite a lot of factories around Peterborough but not that many in Peterborough, yet people tend to gather in certain areas, like we have got in Gladstone and Cromwell area where there used to be an Italian community, then Pakistani, then Caribbean. It keeps changing, but there is always a place for a community.

### **Engin**

Two thoughts/questions. One, Petr, if I understood it correctly you said that 'I am now in a space where I am not a Czech, I'm not a Roma, I'm not British'. I thought 'hmm, I wonder if he would turn it around and say it differently – I now am Roma, I am British and I am Czech, all at once, and I have to negotiate these differences in me'? In the way that the negotiation we have been talking about takes place, not only with others, but also ourselves, as we collect these things as we go along in life.

### **Petr**

For me it is really the sense of being a world citizen. Even though I still have my Czech passport, I don't feel Czech, I haven't got my British citizenship formally, and the Roma culture is something that I'm now developing actually because it was depressed down and now I have to develop it. So, it is difficult and personally I've got some kind of a sense of open citizenship.

### **Agnieszka**

I can very much identify with that. I've spent half of my life in Poland and the other half of my life in the UK and I'm kind of in the middle, I'm not one or the other. And whenever I'm asked the question of my ethnicity I would say I'm European, that's how I see myself, not in any fixed place.

### **Brian**

I think the point is that in different situations and different times, different aspects of your identity come to the fore. I've seen Petr in a meeting in Peterborough with a lot of Roma and he's very much Roma there because in that situation the Roma are relating to him as a Rom. Another Roma friend of mine who was brought up in a children's home now has quite a comfortable middle class life and not particularly strong links to the community, but her sister was murdered by her partner who was Roma and that created a potential feud. You could feel that someone who was living a very comfortable middle class life feared that she may be dragged back into the cultural issues. There can be positive and negative and it can be optional: 'now I'm going to touch base with my roots and at other times I'm just going to lead other aspects of my life where my Roma identity is just one aspect of who I am', which is what I love about this whole exhibition, because it's saying, 'Who are you?', it's not saying, 'Tell us about your Roma identity', it's, 'Tell us about your identity – who are you and what do you think?', which is what it should be about. But I agree, Petr is all those things as opposed to none of them, but it's also that kind of movement within the person.

### **Barby**

But then it calls into question what the boys were saying, and I mean

they're very young at 11 in the video, but they were talking about an acknowledgement and a recognition of their culture. So that their cultural identity is something that is validated in Scotland and accepted. It's interesting how culture or cultural things become assimilated and then some things become very, very difficult to negotiate. For example, with Britain now saying curry is a national dish and tea... these things are completely loaded with so many things and what actually becomes accepted and what doesn't... I think one of the powerful things for me that I definitely saw amongst the Bolton young people was a feeling that 'we're not being accepted talking about our Roma Gypsy identity' and then a video with someone saying 'I am a Gypsy' and that kind of claiming... but also the translating of that into a new context and what that becomes, that new identity of Roma or of Gypsy, what it becomes when it's a new, fused, broader identity. I think what you brought up, the idea of insider/outsider culture, you're shifting from one space having to negotiate or deal with this thing that's possibly negative for your friend and then seeing that and being confronted with those negative visions of what it is to be Roma.

**Eva**

In relation to the insider/outsider identity, at the opening one participant was saying 'Oh I'd like to bring my father and my aunt to see this exhibition, but I'm not sure whether I want to'. She was really proud, wanted to, but at the same time was very cautious. One of you was asking 'why?' Might she have felt that they will see her differently, perhaps in a different light that they hadn't seen before?

**Agnieszka**

I think there are also inter-generational conflicts taking place. The participant to which you refer happens to be non-Roma but I know within the Roma community, the elders in the community fear that the young people are being assimilated into British culture and losing some of their own Roma cultural identity. So there is sometimes resistance. I think the participant you mention meant it that way because her father definitely doesn't know this side of her. She is very much interested in photography and I think she was feeling a little bit apprehensive and maybe embarrassed to show that side of her. In some ways I think it's easier if strangers see your emerging work because they don't really know you, they just look at the pictures. But this was her family member, someone who knew her more intimately, that could see this part of her, something that she had never shared previously.

**Barby**

And also something I know from immigrant experience, being quite young and choosing not to be a lawyer or a doctor or whatever or just taking a degree in art, you want and need to prove it before you kind of... And maybe this is too early in the chrysalis stage for her to prove to her family...

**Eva**

That's something that goes on until forever probably. That's something I'm still negotiating with my family who are trying to say 'well, why haven't you stayed in law, why aren't you a lawyer?' Well I never wanted to be one!

**Barby**

But I think that also for the immigrant experience, if you are going to take the journey out of your family and into a degree place or on to these kind of attained places, there is an expectation that you are going to do something generally regarded as 'very useful'. And lots of people don't necessarily see that role as being very useful. So she's probably struggling with some of those...

**Agnieszka**

And I think also she lacked confidence. So what we were trying to say to her was 'you know this is a wonderful thing you've done here, you should be really proud of your achievement and when your family

comes they will also see it that way'. I think she was worried that they might look at her photos and think 'this is not great' and hence that she had failed in some way.

**Eva**

It's very interesting because she's got strong visual language already developed and passion for creative things, in particular photography. In the beginning of the project she was saying 'oh I couldn't do photography, I'm interested but this is kind of something I do, this is my hobby'. Then throughout the project it changed and she then emailed me and said 'I'm thinking of taking this for a subject when I move on now, can we look at the work and see, I'd like to have a portfolio.' Which to me, was amazing – really, really important.

**Engin**

What about visuality in the project? Camera is like a gaze through which people see themselves, it allows them to have some distance from their lives and shift the perspective a bit on themselves. Can you talk about that aspect of your role in helping them bring that out?

**Kasia**

I found that, maybe because the young people I was working with were quite young and quite shy, they didn't at first really want to be in front of a camera. It took a bit of persuading. However, when they were given

cameras, they enjoyed taking photos and with time they wanted to pose and make videos of each other.

**Eva**

It worked differently though in different locations. That was the case in Newham, while in Bolton it was the opposite. Participants' roles fell into place without any kind of planning and they were very precisely defined: who was going to be behind the camera and who was going to be in front. The group was very performative, so somebody who is very much into singing and performance like Frankie, was presenter, and so on. So it's very different.

What was also interesting was this negotiation within themselves and trying to understand the project and the process itself. So when we took pictures and later looked at them again, the young people were looking at each other's pictures, some took pictures home to their families, and then in the local exhibitions somebody says to us 'this is the moment that I understand about my work... it's not until it's displayed to the public that I got to understand what I wanted to tell and this is almost a starting point. Now I know what I want to say and now I know how I want to present myself and that I would like to do more work with my family.' So there really was this process of constant negotiation and understanding.



### **Agnieszka**

I think it very much depends on their age. Our group was the youngest of all the groups and the majority were girls (we had two boys and the rest were girls). The girls were very self-conscious or image-conscious and quite apprehensive to have photos taken of them. So it took a lot of encouragement for someone to actually take their photo and then for them to approve the photo. They were very much looking at 'do I look good in that photo?' rather than seeing the wider picture.

### **Barby**

It also depends on the context and situations that myself and Delaine Le Bas were in when we visited Scotland for the To Gypsyland exhibition that we were doing there. We heard lots of the young people, some of the DreamMakers, in the context of being around the communities, the Slovakian and Czech Roma communities. They were all posing, they were all young people. Also in Bolton when we had families around, lots of the children were being encouraged to take photos and be in photographs. So suddenly you get a different kind of safety net. They also seemed to just embrace us as people...

### **Sireita**

I was very taken aback by the very quick embracing of trust or sense of trust.

## **Session 3**

### **Barby**

We are going to have more of an in-depth dialogue between Eva and Kabir, who's come up this morning all the way from Bolton. They will recount, in much more detail, some of the ways of working and methodology and what it was like to be involved in DreamMakers.

### **Eva**

I don't know why this sticks in my mind but my partner said 'I'm really looking forward to the opening' because I've been living with this project for all this time now. I started working with the young people in June last year and there was a lot of talking before that. I always show him the work when we do it to have the first response to it. And he said 'to me they [DreamMakers] are like stars. I'm just kind of excited to see the stars in reality now, finally!'

I'm going to go through the project and the methodology that we are using and just break it down to give you some background to the whole thing. The project used Contact Theory as its basis, which is about bringing together individuals from different backgrounds, engaging them in an activity with a common goal and encouraging them to share with each other, to exchange and to bridge gaps or bridge between different cultures. In each of the

four locations, the work went over a period of ten days, more or less, and it was broken down into three phases: pre-production, production and post-production.

Pre-production was usually the first three days where we were learning how to use the cameras, video equipment, sound equipment and also learning about visual literacy. It all was done very much through games. We were trying to work with full body, immersion, not just sitting round the table and listening, being really active because we felt that being engaged with your body meant taking action of your agency. Polaroid was a very popular activity, which was one of the first things that we did. It involved taking the camera and trying to portray another person from the group while being directed by that person and then writing about it, seeing what you look like and whether that's how you want to be portrayed. That kind of to and fro started from the first day, from the first moment, actually. Also the giving of the cameras happened straight from the start, just giving the equipment and learning through using it.

We also spent time thinking about how we can tell stories with pictures. I gave out five pictures that had previously been taken by members of the group and I asked participants to tell a story on the basis of the pictures before them. Even though these were

pictures that some of them took, by taking them out of their original context participants were able to see how pictures can gain new meanings.

We also did some writing with photos we had taken, captioning them. For example, Farzad who is from Afghanistan, related to two pictures that he took in the garden of the school with his own experience and he says 'this beautiful flower is like a new baby full of life, like this house is home to two new babies being born, I tell this story – beginning of a new life'. So to him that was very much the way he experienced his new environment.

During the production phase we spent time preparing for interviews and making visits to different locations. We did a series of interviews with people from the community and beyond the community. We interviewed using special objects to tell stories, talking in front of somebody's house and about how living there feels. We made visits to the court, engaged with the police, engaged with past activities as well. We visited a recording studio and Dominik, who's been writing lyrics since he was eleven, recorded his rap for the first time. It was a beautiful moment and he's going to record more this summer. We also visited a theatre, another radio studio, a stadium. And then, this was very powerful as well, we visited Marcel's home and came to understand his position,

translating between his family, us and the participants. The family mainly speaks Roma and Slovak and Marcel doesn't speak Slovak. For the family it was important that he keeps the culture through the language and also for him to learn English so that he can access education and everything else because they live here now. Finally we visited the Romany museum in Peterborough. That was a very interesting and important experience for everybody. For young Romany people, Victoria said 'I didn't know that my culture reaches so far back' and for non-Roma people it was really important to learn and see the Roma culture from a different perspective.

The phase of post-production involved putting the films together, having to work together, to agree to things and to install the exhibition. We had different exhibitions; in Bolton as part of the exhibition we also had a fashion show, which Kabir will talk about a little bit more. Bolton News came to take photos and run an article on the show and exhibition. For the International Roma Day we produced flags and we had postcards made that were disseminated in Peterborough on the day. We were invited to Sunny Govan, a Glasgow radio station, for an interview that was broadcast live. Two representatives from each group came to London to take part in the co-curating workshop in which we discussed issues of how you bring work together and what you

present with it. Now we are engaging again with the groups through the To GypsyLand project that Barby is curating with the artist Delaine Le Bas, Romany herself.

### **Kabir**

Hi, my name's Kabir Virmani. I'm not going to tell you my age because none of you are going to believe it. Working all together as a group, we all had our differences at the start, but later, as we had more projects coming in, to take more pictures, we all had to pull ourselves together. We were doing this for the college, we were representing Bolton, our own hometown, so let's just put our heads together and start making some beautiful work. As the final project, we've all done well. Hopefully we should have more projects coming soon.

### **Audience**

So will you stay together as a group? Are you still in contact with each other?

### **Kabir**

Yeah, still in contact because we're still college students, so we see each other around every day, in college break times kind of thing. We all have our own subjects, but then our break time is always a set, standard time. So we all get together, sit down and have a joke. And we just discuss the projects that we've done together in the past.

### **Audience**

And how did you all come together? Did you put a call-out Eva?

### **Eva**

No, it was through partners in those locations.

### **Audience**

So you were asked if you wanted to be part of the project?

### **Kabir**

Yeah, that's how it worked. We got an email from one of the college staff, asking us about this. And because they mentioned something about photography, that's what sparked me up, 'yeah, photography, I get to take pictures!' Then, we sat down, first two or three meetings, sat down, found out, went into more research, more detail, more brief. Then from there we just thought 'alright, let's just do it' because obviously experience works nowadays; if you've got a qualification, no one looks at that. Experience always works.

### **Barby**

How did you feel about exposing stuff?

### **Kabir**

Exposing? [laughs]

### **Barby**

Because you're slightly older than some of the younger Traveller participants. You know, there's a particular

kind of relationship, you tell jokes, but tell us more about your family, more about yourself, more about your dreams and aspirations, how did you feel about that?

**Kabir**

Well what happened was, we all sat down once and then obviously everyone has their moments, their happy moments, everyone has their sad moments. And I remember one of my colleagues, before when we did our first show ever, we never used to talk, we just used to have that silence, but then once I saw him cry. I thought 'what happened?' So I told everyone who was around us, 'you just carry on', we'll meet you at the Exellency. So we sat down and he just opened up completely, like a book, to me. So then, that's what got me into the group more because everyone knew him, he was the most common, popular one there, because he was youngest, everyone knows him. So from there it just went from me being a complete stranger to everyone, to everyone's elder brother, so everyone just opens up to me and sits there talking, to get advice. Whatever I've been through, I tell them, I tell them how to handle it. That's it, just exposing yourself, it happens in time. It can't just be done like that if you don't know anyone. It just takes time to reveal yourself to others.

**Barby**

And that intimacy I think is to do with

the Bolton group. I mean, I'd have to ask the group but you can certainly see it in the work and some of the things you said, about going through the process, the conflicts and recognising, which I think is something that happens probably when you're a bit older and process a bit more.

**Kabir**

It does. When you're, I'd say, from as soon as you hit your teens, from 13 to about 19, you are like that, you still feel as if you're a big kid, that's how I feel still. But it's one of them where, because you're still young, you think 'yeah, I don't have any responsibilities, I can be whoever I want, do whatever I want'. But you don't have that time to think that 'if I'm like this now, what's going to happen in the future? What's it going to turn-on on me?'

**Barby**

And this project gave that opportunity to question that?

**Kabir**

Yeah, it did. It made me think a lot more because obviously more qualifications gets you some place anyway, but you need that experience as well. So it made me more mature as a person. Back then I was 19, when she started coming over. From there, at the age of 19, I was thinking as though I was 35 years old, I was just thinking the future of the process. We just wanted to do the project and get

a finalised, complete project out of it which would give us a lot of experience. It made us all get somewhere and mature in our own ways. Now, thankfully, we don't have any of the conflict between us, we don't have differences.

**Barby**

I think that's very powerful, that you were resolving it, and resolving it through differences.

**Eva**

And having to be professional and good.

**Barby**

What do you feel you will take away from the project?

**Kabir**

I gain... obviously, I started before, man, I was a bit shaky, thinking 'what am I going to say?' Then I started to gain my confidence. I've gained my experience of working in a group. I've got my experience of talking to you, communicating with my teammates, my colleagues, the staff. And from there, another qualification on top, which would make any parent proud 'yeah, you got another qualification on the wall!' But from there, it's mostly experience and communication, which adds to your confidence level.

**Barby**

You mentioned belonging, that you

were really connected. You were the only Asian child in the school. We talked a bit earlier about how Roma in Glasgow identified with Asian people because they felt more connected and looked similar. How did you feel learning about the other young people?

**Kabir**

It's like when you have new people coming into your area and say you live in a new estate, new people come in. You think, 'hold on, shall I go over? Shall I go and see what they are like?' Just to see what the neighbourhood will be like with the new lot. So you go over and talk to them. If they respond positively then you know it'll be a great neighbourhood. But if you get that negativity from them then you know that it's just going to go downhill. That's what we had before at the start of the project, we had our differences. Then slowly, slowly, a lot opened, we got stronger in a group and it just helped us to get much better. So I can understand how hard it is for other students and my colleagues who are from Czech Republic, Slovakia, or Polish people because it was hard for me as well in high school and primary school, just to get along and to get from one place to another. But now I understand that obviously if you've been through it then you can understand everyone else has been through it. If you know that then everything else is fine.



**Eva**

So back to language. Language, really, is at the core of the whole thing. In Glasgow, young people that moved there and were there for about three months, had a very strong Scottish accent. I found that interesting because, how do we belong? We belong by trying to work with the space.

**Audience**

With some of the Roma kids that were keeping a second language, were they tending to prioritise Czech or Slovak, or Romany as the second language? There's a difference between Frankie who kept Czech and English, but others saying they kept Romany and English.

**Eva**

I think it varies. I think it depends when somebody moves to this country. Frankie moved at a very early age, so he was 5, or even a bit less than that, so that's kind of the determining factor. But then, at the exhibition opening, about a week ago, young people from all locations came down to 198 and immediately they bonded, which I've never seen before, for groups just to come together and talk, and talk in Romany. Or mainly it was Romany. It was amazing to see that, again, language was bringing people together, and it was Romany.

**Engin**

How do you see your role in being

a mediator? You've been something and something, or maybe somethings or somethings. You're a conduit, you're a mobiliser. How do you think through that, and especially in view of the method? Method, at one level, is how you make this thing happen. But at the same time, method is your power.

**Eva**

Yeah, I feel a collaborator. So we were working together and even though the method was loosely produced before, as a skeleton, it was really filled in by my collaborators. For me, collaborator is very different to participant. I'm looking at it as participation. Participatory art form is almost the overarching umbrella in which you can fit in a participant – so I'm taking part in somebody's project, I'm a participant but on an equal level – so therefore I'm a collaborator or a co-producer. I think collaborator or co-producer are much more suited for the way I see it.

**Engin**

So then I have a question for Kabir – what did you think she was doing when you first responded?

**Kabir**

I thought she was doing... don't ask. No, the main role of, when you go to a workplace and you have work to do, she was like the supervisor. She was helping us with what to do, she was giving us talks, just so we can build up on it. So she would give us

a sentence and from that sentence we would make a paragraph out of it. So it was like that. I've done filming before as well, like movies. So I'm like director there as well, and production assistant, where she was giving us all the peripherals, the tools, the cameras, everything, the boom. So she just gave us that supervisor, production assistant.

**Eva**

It's interesting what you say because I think those roles are so shifted. Because then there were some collaborators who would go 'no, no, we have to do it like this'...

**Kabir**

But we hardly listened to them did we?

**Eva**

Politics is coming through!

**Kabir**

Eva was the only one who was giving us the tasks. We would only listen to her. We wouldn't listen to anyone else.

**Barby**

It's interesting that you say that because I think that that positionality is always a thing that you have to question because you said collaborator. Actually a lot of this stuff wouldn't happen without an instigator. So that role does shift quite a lot. You were directing, and in a sense there is this

role and I sometimes wonder about that sort of positionality. It's something we were also talking about, there are always people who are instigators within the thing, there's no pure horizontal way of being...

**Eva**

There's no democracy...

**Barby**

... but it's interesting that it brings out somebody that says 'no, we should do it that way' and whether the leader can take on that position and that space and still take the group together and still steer a collaborative situation. There's never a comfortable thing about collaborating. But of course all those things that you brought forward, like conflict, they are all part of the collaborative process. So I think that there's something that you have to acknowledge as well – you said 'I learnt how to work together', but you also learnt how to collaborate, you learnt how to put your position and still work together. So you still had that position. I think that's maybe the power in collaboration.

**Kabir**

Like I said before, positivity and negativity comes in. If you get positive behaviour from someone else, then you know you can work and make some good work. But when you get negativity off someone, then they'll put you off. It'll just make you

think, 'why am I going in? If they don't appreciate what I do, then why should I do it?' In those circumstances I just said to myself, 'I'm just going to ignore them. I'm just going to carry on with what Eva's taught me to do.' It's the best way to do it because we all did what we got taught by Eva and we made some good work, as you can see around.

### **Barby**

Don't you think though that all of this stuff is personalities or people in places like you described. When a new community comes, you're kind of curious. One thing I wondered is if you've got a media perception of somebody you might actually take that on board and you want to know about them.

### **Kabir**

It's kind of like stereotyping. You see someone like me on the street, big, bald, without a beard, he's got an earring in. The first thing you're going to think is that he's a thug. And he's Asian as well, so that's even worse! But then once you get to know that person, that's when you know 'hold on mate, whatever I thought of him or her is completely different and it's just the appearance'. It's actually been quoted: never judge a book by its cover.

### **Hilary**

What you're describing is, in some ways, quite similar to how teachers,

when they get together, or students get together or are encouraged to work in groups, really grapple with who's in charge. Some of them try to take control and some of them are happy to just be there and listen. Somebody's conscious that it's got to move, you've got to think about the task as well. So it's really interesting hearing how you were grappling with that really, being up against somebody who wanted to be in charge. You don't want to deflate them but in some ways you've got to support them seeing that it isn't about one person being in charge, it's meant to be collaborative.

### **Kabir**

Because this project was one of them where everyone was in charge; if you all put your ideas together, put your work together, then you make some good work, that's how it works.

### **Barby**

So we are going to extend the conversation a little bit and then conclude. I'm going to introduce you to Sireita who's going to pose a few questions to us to push the conversation.

### **Sireita**

There are so many different themes and dimensions to the project. It's definitely an inter-disciplinary project and process. I was thinking through all of the different things that were said and there were a number of points that really jumped out at me

that I thought I should probably just share before going into these questions. So in addition to this need suggested for an inter-disciplinary dialogue, I was thinking, there's always a cross disciplinary discussion going on with artists, sociologists and anthropologists. But I'd really like to see more involvement from the political science, more representation or more of a dialogue going on between those spaces.

Another thing that jumped out at me was this idea of passing – passing from one or, as one, identity to another – identity shifting. And, just before going into the questions, this idea of an erosion of legacies whereby, there was some concerns at the beginning coming up by young people with regards to their culture and the erosion of a cultural legacy, I felt that those were really important themes that were coming out of the project. And I think, just finally with this theme reflection, the importance of reflexivity for the practitioner, the participant and the community. And also, the impact of image or visuality and the way in which visuality actually reinforces reflexivity. Listening to Kabir and the other participants, the way it really encourages a thinking of identity, if you hadn't thought about it before or you find yourself in this particular position.

That brings us straight to the effects or affect of representation as the first

question that we could probably think about – the affect or effect of representation – and what new meanings are brought forward when thinking about how representation is affecting, impacting communities, participants, teachers, artists – everyone will have a different view, position and response to how this idea of representation features within their own role, or their own engagement with the entire project and particular or specific processes.

### **Eva**

Well the first thing I can think is what we touched upon, this looking at, looking through, looking, having a different perspective. So looking through the camera or looking at the camera looking at you, or looking at other people involved in the project, them looking at something. So these relationships I thought were very interesting. And I'm interested to see how that affects your own position and also presence and whether that supports you being more active in claiming what you want.

### **Sireita**

An example was drawn upon earlier on when you spoke about a particular young lady who was in a duel position of whether her parents should attend or not. I think that helps to look at the way in which representation brings new meaning in the sense of having to navigate these different spaces of public and private. That

was definitely one of the things that came up when you were talking about it earlier. Were there any additional examples that may speak to that?

### **Kasia**

Young people were, in terms of that idea of having their pictures or videos displayed publically, they were really... they had to know where we were going to show them, who is going to actually see them. Obviously once we explained, well this is a project and what was happening, they were happy with it. But I guess it related to questions about who's going to see them and who's going to see a different me or the same me?

### **Sireita**

There's a concern about the extension of self within this public space.

### **Hilary**

I think certainly the students we worked with really were excited at the prospect of doing something different that other students in their year group were not involved in. They had no problems with having their photographs taken at all or taking photographs. As someone was saying before, they're at the age where they just embrace new technology. They've all got phones so they're so used to taking photographs and filming each other all the time. But it's working with a big camera really and getting to know each other, getting to know Eva. And

the project was very interesting for them because it enabled them to talk about themselves and consider their own lives and learn from others. I think the whole process for them was entirely positive; finding that their work was going to be displayed was so exciting for them. Their friends came to see the exhibition and their families and of course it's been seen by people they didn't know and it was there for a number of days. So I don't think they were intimidated, it was all really a new experience where, rather than losing confidence because they were presented there in the spotlight, you could see when they were in the exhibition walking around, people suddenly registered, 'oh this is the girl that's in that photograph there'. And rather than feeling intimidated I think they loved it, they felt empowered. I think it was superb for them.

### **Kasia**

Some of the Roma young people said 'not everyone at school knows I am Roma and I don't want people to know necessarily'. So it's more about identity, they may be happy for people to see photographs, but they or their parents probably have had negative experiences in the past, when others discriminated them or bullied them because of their ethnicity and they want to avoid it. Some people at the school know they are Roma but young people wouldn't openly advertise...

### **Sireita**

Yeah, so it's not necessarily a hiding but just not so readily willing to reveal.

### **Kasia**

Yeah it may also be because of their age. They were quite young and maybe they will mature and be able to express and talk about their cultural background more in the future.

### **Eva**

This is really interesting because when we were first planning the project and thinking what the title would be, we asked 'are we going to say this is a project with Gypsy Roma Travellers and non-Roma young people?' Wanting to be transparent, that's something we wanted to say. So there wasn't any reason, that's what the project is about, identity and all the things that go with it. Even when we were putting up the blog, how do you set up the blog that participants are going to be posting to? And I had to set up the blog before I started working with the participants.

### **Sireita**

How did they respond to you publishing information via this blog? How did they feel about that?

### **Kabir**

Nervous because then we knew our work was going to go onto the internet. But then when we realised it would get us and the project some eyes, it made us happier because

then we knew that everyone could see our work.

### **Sireita**

Excited. How about confident with the work you've already produced? Confident in sharing it and continuing perhaps?

### **Kabir**

Yeah more confident. And not to hide things, to be more confident and opened up and show the world what you can do.

### **Barby**

It's just come to mind, the first project that I ever worked on was in four cities. I worked in London. They couldn't afford to send me away but there were four cities, it was Dhaka, Bangladesh, Dakar in Kenya, and also Cape Town, maybe the fourth city was London. Young people were doing very similar work of representing themselves. I actually see some of the young people that I worked with, they're in their 20s now, and they were between the ages of probably 7 and 11 and I think one of the things that was quite interesting about it is, marking the place and position in time, that kind of representation of themselves in time. Particularly now, because when I did that project we had real problems with transporting that work in various places because the internet just did not work. Sometimes you didn't actually see work from the other place. Sending emails



that you didn't know got through. So kids in Brixton were sending an email to Kenya and it got lost sometimes in the translation of the technology. But also the other thing that's really important now, in the curating workshop that we did with the participants for this exhibition we talked about how you can curate your own space with your Facebook page. But what this opportunity offers is a different kind of reflection and I think it would be really interesting to think about this group, to look at it again in five years' time, to reflect on the positioning and places and the impact or the things that you talk about that you want to do, wanting to experience, or how, say for example, going to the court has enabled you to be able to deal with a Jobcentre or different sorts of situations in your life. I think that's interesting.

### **Sireita**

Yeah and we really are at a time where everyone's involved in this curatorial process, the curating of self, and I think that's exactly what you're referring to. There's a pivotal moment where you first start to curate the self and I think that's what all of the participants in most of these participatory projects do, especially if they're doing it for the first time. As you said, you come across these young people later on and they'll be like 'oh yeah I remember when I did this project and it changed my life and from there I've gone on to do X'.

### **Eva**

Just to add to that... Correct me, but I felt that this curating of the self didn't happen throughout the project but at the moment of the exhibition, that's the moment that this would start happening, where people would go back thinking 'now I know what I want to talk about'. The exhibition was the point where everything crystallised and everybody understood what the project was about.

### **Barby**

Actually doing the project, the young people I worked with years ago, they didn't have that reflection in the same way. Now you've got the opportunity to post everything on Facebook, to stop and say 'actually, this is what I want to post on my Facebook', a reflective opportunity.

### **Sireita**

Which is what you're saying Eva, whereby you go back on the artifacts, the things you've produced, and you also give them new meaning so they're constantly in the significance.

### **Mark**

There's something in there which is about you as language teacher because actually this is a visual language. It's another foreign language and in terms of representation and thinking about making those choices about how you're perceived – what is your representation, how will others see you sort of thing – and

then how you can take control of that and how you want to represent yourself visually. I think it's really interesting that as well as being collaborator you are sort of language teacher too. So it isn't just giving someone a camera and saying 'go and take the pictures and somebody will represent you' because as soon as you put that in the public domain someone is going to read those images and make assumptions about you. So that becomes a big part of your role.

### **Eva**

That's what newspapers do all the time.

### **Barby**

We went to Sunny Govan. Just to think about, say Fazad, who I know you remember speaking to Eva, you said he didn't really speak English when you first started to work with him and then visiting again in December his Scottish accent was something else. And then his ability to actually articulate publicly what you did, on the radio show. So then language teaching is really important, starting visually and then penetrating into the way you articulate yourself.

### **Hilary**

I think, Eva, you navigated our kids through a process whereby they had to go through a series of steps: working as individuals, working as a small group that were from the same school but they didn't know each

other but had something in common. I know in one case, it wasn't until they came here and they saw their own work and could relate to that sense of pride, seeing where it fitted in the bigger picture and that they were part of something that they perhaps couldn't visualise until we saw it. We were going back on the train and one of the students who's quiet, a real deep thinker, I couldn't shut him up! It was like a switch went on! It was amazing, a lovely moment. You saw some things happened to him and he talked about how he wants to do well in school and what he's interested in. Two minutes would pass then he would say something else. He was really obviously very thoughtful and had been walking around and taking it all in and taking the time to process. But he's been through that individual – dare I say it, it's very cliché – journey. But I strongly believe it's made such a difference to him as an individual and to the group.

### **Sireita**

And in terms of the making of difference and the impact that the process has had on him as an individual and I'm sure all the other participants, I'm wondering about the wider community or other people who were perhaps just passing. Are there any examples that you could perhaps share that illustrate the impact the project has had on those who are viewing or those who had a little insight? Maybe even on family members. Can you

draw upon the project and say 'this is an example of perhaps change or even awareness'?

#### **Eva**

There were several comments from within groups where young people were saying 'I didn't know that this is like this or this is like that'.

#### **Barby**

In the Peterborough school when the exhibition went up, just as we were waiting for it to start, there was the deal that if you have got a comment, find out what this was about then you got a cake. And actually in that moment there were people coming back. There was much more than going back and saying it was about photographs. There were moments when they were reading things and taking things in. So that was an interesting moment, there happened to be a switch of 'oh there's more about this than just a school project'.

#### **Eva**

There was also, for example Sophie, she said a few times that she didn't know this or that, she is British and I think she learned a lot about the Romany, perhaps culture, history as well. She was learning about another culture but also what was said in the Peterborough group. Then I think Victoria said 'oh I had no idea we did so much work, we were just having fun'. To her, there's a whole new concept, a change in that she sees

work in a different way. To me that was very important because that's how people develop new paths and relationships with something like school, court, police or a different culture.

#### **Barby**

And also work. Particularly for them, for migrants work is often for them, for their families, part of that journey, it becomes a kind of fixed, almost sort of tedium. I know this certainly from my own family migration, mum working in the factory, you get this idea of what work is in that particular way. There was a different kind of opportunity...

#### **Eva**

And work affects life... this relates to another thing in Glasgow because there was a lot of change happening in terms of people coming and leaving. So out of the group I worked with (made up of 11 people), within that group 4 people moved back to Slovakia in the space of 6 months perhaps or a bit more maybe, let's say 10 months. The work was at the core of this movement: 'if my father doesn't get work then we are going to move on'. Then there was also work in relation to somebody talking about 'when my mother goes to work then I need to look after my aunt'. So if their aunt wasn't able to be there in that flat with them, then that kind of working dynamic wouldn't be possible. So work has lots of connotations.

#### **Sireita**

That brings us to the last question which forces us to think about the role of the arts and its impact on the social and political positions of young people and how we understand this impact, how they understand the impact. Are they aware of how fantastically the arts assist in revealing these various positions – the social, political, definitely the personal, they speak about that a lot, their identity, who they are and so forth.

#### **Barby**

I just wonder in school, in education, whether they actually saw it as art because I think that when you have a subject area that is taught in a particular way, just like when we were talking about citizenship, if you had thrown in some of these questions in the project citizenship, maybe they wouldn't regard it as citizenship, or if you throw it in an art context they wouldn't think of it is art. I just wonder whether they actually realised it was art until it was displayed in an exhibition format or a gallery format. I don't know if before that, apart from Eva introducing herself as an artist and then having to break down that role of artist, whether they actually realised what they were doing was art.

#### **Sireita**

What did they think they were doing? Because this is where the inter-disciplinary thing starts to start. Did they think they were engaged

in a sociological investigation? Did they think they were doing a visual ethnography?

#### **Hilary**

They're kids. You ask them to do it and they try their best but it's to give people a level really.

#### **Sireita**

I think I asked those questions because it was based upon whether or not the facilitator informed them of this methodology.

#### **Philippa**

They knew there was going to be an exhibition at the end and obviously they knew Eva was an artist, but I don't for a minute think that they thought it was art.

#### **Hilary**

I think they had to see the end project, in a sense, to understand what their contribution meant.

#### **Philippa**

It's so different from the art they do at school.

#### **Mark**

Also that's why this is so much more powerful in this space because it looks like art, it's in a gallery, in a proper gallery. You compare this to exactly the same work in the school foyer in Peterborough and actually that sort of format that you're used to, in terms of work being put up in

the school on temporary panels, it felt more like a sort of show-and-tell, more like a documentary. It's that bigger thing of it becoming art because it's in an art institution. It sounds like they responded to that in terms of coming here and how excited they were because it allowed them to see the work differently.

### **Sireita**

There's something intriguing about being involved in an art project anyway. How did you describe the life of the project, the process, the project's never ended, but where it's got to now? Do you describe it as an art project or are there any other things that you think?

### **Eva**

I think it would be very much informed by how it's produced. So you can produce it in this form, you can produce it as a book, as a newspaper. It's lendable to different pieces because of the content because it's the content that's the most important guiding thing about it. You could read it from many different angles. It's also funded through the social justice programme of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation. It's not funded through the arts, which is very important. We've always framed it as an art project because the main organisation behind it is an arts organisation because I am an artist because that's what we were interested in. But also it's what I believe is the most easily

communicated to the young people. It's not having to wrap it in big words or explanations, it explains itself by itself and while we were doing that, we were doing photography about you, your family and community. Your interests, dreams and aspirations. So it was never really too rigidly defined as anything.

### **Sireita**

I asked that because I think it is a perfect example of the way in which art functions in this inter-disciplinary, multi-model way, whereby it speaks to almost every discipline. On that note, I think that's it for the questions.

## **Session 4**

### **Barby**

We've come to an end of a really stimulating day so I'm sure we've got lots of things to talk about as we wrap up and think about where we go next with DreamMakers. At this point I'd like to invite Brian to chair this plenary point of summing up. Brian is an educational consultant, centering on inclusion, monitoring and evaluation. He is currently working in projects in the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Slovakia, Macedonia and he's worked a lot with the traveller education support services in London. He chairs the Advisory Council for Education of Romanys and other Travellers and he's a trustee of the Traveller Movement. He's going to sum us up. We're also going to have reflection from Engin because she's been here for the whole day and it would be really interesting to have the opportunity to reflect on what you've seen.

### **Brian**

Thank you. Really all I can do is reflect on the exhibition and what I've heard today, from my own perspective. Very briefly, my own perspective is that I've spent quite a lot of my professional career in what is known as traveller education in this country, which is the education of Gypsy Roma Travellers, most of the time trying to engage families with mainstream schools and build the capacity of schools to give those kids a good

deal. The national network has taken a big hit in the process of the cuts and it also coincided with my... I'll say taking my pension... my retirement, but essentially I've carried on working. So I've found myself in a position of looking at what has been achieved over the last 30, 40 years and where we should be going next.

One of the things I've felt, with hindsight, is that we focus on a very narrow aspect of people's lives. So, there was a lot of campaigning about sites, finding homes, accommodation, there's a lot of focus on attendance, getting kids into school, the practicalities, responding to mobility, responding to social issues. In all honesty, one tended to get drawn into working with the families who were coping least well. What, in the last two or three years, I've become particularly aware of in the work Eva's been doing, and also my international work, is that an awful lot has been going on of which I wasn't aware. Often individual Gypsy Roma and Traveller young people are finding their way through the system. We're all the time thinking, 'Oh, how can we make the [education] system work for these kids?' It probably won't, but what they're doing is finding a way through. And what I think Eva's captured here is some sort of sense of that, that all these kids, it's not about – well obviously we've got an intercultural group anyway – but it's not about their ethnicity. It's not about them being Polish or Slovakian



or Pakistani, or anything else. That's one aspect of every individual's identity, but identity is much more exciting and has got many more layers. What I feel that Eva does is give people space and confidence to explore that and say, 'Yes, this is who I am'. Somebody mentioned curating your own exhibition of your life. I don't think it's even that. It's just 'this is who I am, this is what I do, have a look at it, what do you think?' As an exhibition I find it absolutely... I want to stay here! Every time we have a break, I just want to have another look at things; there's no sense of feeling satiated by this exhibition.

Coming back to my Gypsy Roma Traveller kind of past... we'd be inclined, if we were putting on an exhibition to say 'oh, what shall we do? We'll do racism, we'll do social need, we'll do...' It would have a narrative, and it would be a narrative you'd heard before, and you'd think 'you know, that did touch all the bases' and you'd walk in and say 'oh yeah, there's persecution, there's the Holocaust, you know, we've done it'. But this is exactly not that – there's no clear narrative, nobody's pushing a line, nobody's saying, you know, 'this is what you should be thinking'. All it seems to be saying to me is 'this is who I am, this is what's important to me, I'm displaying it'. And so having said how wonderful I think Eva's work is, the only disappointing thing is, when she tells it how she

tells it... it's just not all there is it? It's just like 'oh we had that session and that session' but really there's a lot more there. I really think she has a sense – it does sound very brown-nosey but that's not the point – there is a moral purpose in what she does and it's very profound. She never mentions it. But it is there and it actually says, how I work, how I treat people, what I'm looking for in them. It's all about mutual respect and moving them on. She says 'yes, this is my work and this is my art' and that is fine, but it's not something that's been expropriated from other people, it is something which is created in collaboration with other people. I just find it quite moving.

I wasn't sure what the day today was going to be and then there was this really challenging contribution about what citizenship is and I was thinking, there are all these people on the streets [the Occupy camp outside St Paul's] who aren't supposed to be there because they're a bit too wealthy and it's only the poor and oppressed who are meant to rebel and rise-up. I was thinking, this is because they want citizenship, they want the society to reflect their needs and not the needs of international capitalism or FIFA or whatever. So I found today very interesting. I found all the projects... I feel I know quite a few of the participants and I'm sure if I do all the videos and I actually spend more time here, there

is a sort of immersion and I will know more people.

One more thing, which is where do we go from here? I think that is really challenging. Another string to my bow is I do one-to-one teaching with kids doing writing, or I do some group work, booster classes. But the whole point of what I try to do is to build a sense of confidence, that kids can do things, that they are skilled and capable. That is the magic and I think that Eva has got that sort of skill. She does it in a hugely more exciting way than I do as a teacher, but nevertheless it is key and it is really needed. So I'm not sure how this can be fed into the education system in a more general way, and I think that could be part of the discussion, but I think almost any kid could benefit from having that opportunity to express themselves in a range of media, to learn new skills. I think that the whole thing of displaying it, planning a display, provides a huge number of skills.

## Engin

Thanks very much Brian. That was really a fitting, inspiring reflection on an inspiring day itself. I found the whole day really stimulating, allowing us to think about the relation between art, politics, identity, citizenship, in a rather different way. I think Brian really articulated well something that I felt – there's more to this project than Eva lets out. Probably Eva is working with an artistic sensibility about this

because I think that's what artists do really well: they do, rather than talk about their experiences and then leave others to talk about it. Which brings me to the comments I want to make: I don't know if Eva would actually think about it this way, but when I was just listening to the discussion as well as the exhibition, getting a sense of the process, how people are describing it, what happened in this entire project, a number of themes were presenting themselves to me.

One of them, of course, the people who are involved in this project are not any people. They are not, for example, wealthy French migrants to London, or Russian oligarchs buying properties in London. We are talking about a group of people who are marginalised, disfranchised, disempowered and excluded in many ways from established communities. So what this project does is to empower them, by building confidence in them, by allowing them to express themselves through means that they had not been aware of (or they had not been given the opportunity to develop). Whatever the outcomes are, to me, that word presents itself very, very strongly – a project of 'empowerment'. In a particular society where certain groups of people are presented in negative ways, what the project does, to me, is transform that sense of being portrayed or stereotyped from outside, or being a passive recipient of stereotypes, into being an active

producer of images. That to me is the empowerment process. I've felt that when I was looking at the images in the exhibition, and some of the words, the most effective of them, or affective of them, on me, are the ones that portray these passive subjects, who would normally be consumers, as active subjects, actually producers.

These active subjects are exactly the opposite of Kabir's portrayal of that stereotyped passive subject. That to me is probably the most significant accomplishment: the subject that it produces, the values that it cultivates. In that sense, I think, although I agree with Brian that the project has a moral purpose. It is also political. It's producing political subjects. We know that in our culture most young people, even when they are not stereotyped, they are really treated and addressed as passive consumers. Through advertising media, through other means, they are always acted upon. They don't act upon the world in which they find themselves. So you may become free in the limited choices that you make but the choices are given to you through advertising and other means. But here, Eva is not giving two or three options for them to choose, but giving equipment through which to explore infinite possibilities by becoming producers themselves. That aspect really impressed me. That what we are seeing is producing subjects and, through that production, they are being empowered. So all the

confidence and the sort of swagger that comes with that, is exactly that: being empowered means taking their own narrative into their own hands. You can't help but notice that's what's happened. The narratives are being taken over by the people who are being narrated about.

I would have other things to say but I think that's really the only one that I wanted to particularly single out. Then I want to just say, should we really call Eva 'curator'? Because I was just noting what words were being used to describe her activity. She called herself 'collaborator'. Kabir called her 'supervisor'. Other words were co-producer, director, instigator. I don't know, I think it is worth thinking a little bit more about this. Should we perhaps call her 'an empowering agent'? I know it is a cumbersome one but it doesn't really matter whether that's publicly presented. Amongst ourselves it would be important, for understanding and undertaking similar projects, to think about what role she has created for herself as an artist. I thought that she created herself as an active subject, which is powerful. In fact, I was quite intrigued when at the end of the day we learned that the project was funded through a social justice programme. So, in a beautiful way it was actually fulfilling exactly what that programme asked for: rather than aestheticizing and romanticising the experience, it actually produced

active subjects that are capable of producing a narrative about themselves and a new artist subject who has a different relation to herself. That to me was really significant.

### **Barby**

Can I offer something, in terms of being a curator. I work in this space and have worked with Eva for quite some time and worked on her *Belonging* exhibition before and we have quite similar interests in our making work that we could loosely call 'socially engaged'. Sometimes we have trouble with these terms. I think what has been really very clear is you can actually map the social impact on these young people. You can actually really see it. Hilary's example was completely brilliant about one participant who came and was extremely quiet and they got him to help me to put the lights on and we had a conversation. He is very interested in science and that's going to be quite a journey for him to get out of his head 'this is the background that I'm from', towards 'to be a scientist, I want to go on this journey', and to be able to facilitate that through going 'we know somebody who you can talk to'. So there's another extension that you can possibly do and that's the way that we're working in this gallery and as practitioners, myself and Eva as well, to push beyond the boundaries of the work and also the subject of the work, but then also into the realms of social interaction.

The other thing that I wanted to think about, in my MA thesis I wrote about identity and stereotypes. I read a lot of Homi Bhabha and what was being said when we were talking, and Eva and Kabir were talking, was this idea of emergence. I think one thing that kind of happened here in this work is this emergence of identities. Bhabha's really talking about it in terms of when you move places (the book is called 'The Location of Culture' and he's probably more talking about Postcolonial identity), but you kind of emerge as a kind of modernist (I don't like the word modernist). But the idea of expressing yourself in your new place. And I think that, particularly with some of the young people, there's definitely this thing of "coming out" (as British), of taking the image and showing themselves as emerging in a new place. This is something I'm interested in - what are the potentials, what may happen next? How do you possibly work to pick that up again in a few years' time to see what happened? What has gone beyond and what emerged from them after working in this way? I think that's quite an exciting prospect, this idea of these young people having this opportunity, at that time, to reflect on and think about how they're developing themselves and their position in society.

### **Eva**

I'd be very interested in hearing about the project you mentioned.

## Engin

I was mentioning to Eva that we did a project with Romani people, about Romani people. It was not an art project but a social science project, doing research (which relates to what I was saying earlier). Instead of portraying the Roma people, the Sinti people, as victims (it's always something that's done to them), we wanted to find examples of what they have done themselves. Whether you're against them, you have prejudice against them, or even if you're in support of them, our society constantly puts this victimhood onto people who are actually intelligent and active. They know what they need to do, it's just they don't have the resources and opportunities. They are the survivors and yet they are always the ones who are in need of help. So I worked with colleagues in Berlin and in Rome and we discovered two instances where, in Rome, Roma people took over the Colosseum, no less, in the height of the tourist season. They nailed demands on the entry that these things have to happen in Rome about the Roma people and until that happens, we're not leaving. There was considerable politicisation about that, but hardly any media attention. So a research group that we formed, they went and interviewed people and reconstructed the entire process of what happened in the Colosseum. The other one, in Berlin, Roma people took over a park and they refused to leave until their demands were met. In

a very shameful process the German government, eventually realising that they were dealing with European citizens (so they did not have the right to deport them), bought them – meaning they gave money to people to go back to Bulgaria and Romania so that the problem would go away.

This was hardly studied. Again our research team put together the whole process and we have just published the book that contains these chapters. But the point is that our project found incredible political know-how, resilient instincts and capabilities, artistic sensibilities, intelligence. All of that in abundant display. So only a misguided and prejudiced person would actually interpret these people merely as 'victims' who just need to be helped. The help they need is to be recognised. Someone mentioned earlier the notion of recognition. It is important to recall that this means registering their agency – that's what we failed to recognise – they are agents.

And then we have a governmental discourse, as Gilane was saying, a discourse about 'oh people are not being political, young people don't take up politics and so on'. But this is not the case. There are plenty of people who are taking up political positions, it's just there isn't the media to recognise it.

## Barby

And also the discourse, maybe they don't actually think it's political in the same way because the political process that we are taught is this party-political, formal political way of being.

## Brian

Can I just add one thing? It comes up when we are talking specifically about Roma and the future of DreamMakers. I think, we talked last year when you were planning, it was very much focused on Gypsy Roma Traveller communities. I think the fact that it ended up not exactly like that is a real benefit. I am wondering whether there could be a packaged unit that focuses on raising kids' self-esteem, around this sort of model, that is offered to schools? But definitely I feel that that would not target any particular group because the benefit it's got of being inter-cultural is huge.

At the moment I'm working in the Czech Republic. Seeing some of the conditions that the families have come to the UK to get away from. They are stuck in socially excluded dwellings, they're basically workers' hostels from collective farms and mining companies. So you have these blocks of flats, usually in very poor condition. We're not totally sure why they are full of Roma. My suspicion is probably people who get into rent arrears are moved into these sub-standard properties and you

end up with these separate blocks. There's huge benefit dependency. The kids are going either into what they call 'practical schools', which are the renamed special schools, or into segregated schools, or if they're going into integrated schools, they may go into separate, segregated classes, because white parents complain. So you have this whole segregated system. I'm involved in voluntary projects trying to create change and I can't see a way forward. There's no real social mobility for those families. They can't get out of those ghettos, and OK, their culture's become quite introspective, they have a good life, they're happy, they have good times. But they're going nowhere. I mean that's not the whole Roma community. Petr described the other side of it, where people are trying to keep a low profile and they want to go into normal schools and they don't want anyone to know they're Roma and they're just hoping local skinheads don't pick them out and that their skin's not too dark. So we've got that other side of the coin, if you like. But what services are doing in the Czech Republic, trying to improve life in those situations, they're not able to do anything to change those situations. So I think developing and hanging onto the inter-cultural nature of this project is something which is really important because that is the way out. So that, essentially, Roma are not spending 24/7 thinking 'I am Roma'. They are



thinking 'I am a footballer, I am an artist, I am an actor, I'm gay'. There are so many other elements to identity, which if you are stuck in those kind of closed environments, it's very difficult to think outside the box.

### **Barby**

Don't you think though that some of that has got to do with 10 years of Roma inclusion? Sometimes that problematising and even the funding that is thrown at it, repeats and services the perpetuation of this kind of story. So actually at the end of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, if we really evaluated it, we might be in the same position as 10 years before. I wonder about the vision. I really appreciate what you were saying about an inter-cultural dialogue because I think that is really, really important. When we were in Scotland we saw a show which was called 'Open for Everything'. It was a Berlin-based Argentine artist and a lot of the performers were Roma. And some of the stuff they were coming out with in the performance, they were talking about, so blatantly in your face talking about the way people talk about people. The perception of people. But then also the perception happens always both ways. Kabir has mentioned the 'we didn't really know what these people were like, new people' and the media has a massive role to play in these kinds of conversations.

One thing that is really interesting

about the DreamMakers is that the explicit talking about Roma Gypsy Travellers was intentional. But I actually wonder if we can go beyond that, when you're talking about this inter-cultural dialogue, so that although there is an underlying thing about this, it's really important to have the conversation across all kinds of young people. So that they're actually creating their agency, so they're actually defining what it is that they want. So that when we go beyond that, they don't need our help, they can find a kind of way of expression and sharing that expression together. That's something that is not taught in schools. It is separate, you know 'we celebrate Diwali, those kids are allowed to go off because it's Eid, and Black History Month... and it's Gypsy Roma Traveller Month'. Sometimes it's actually divisive tools, going back to the thing of toleration, rather than creating a much more fluid conversation about these things. We don't need one month to talk about Travellers or the Holocaust.

### **Brian**

And we don't want to talk about them as one group.

### **Hilary**

I think until the situation changes in countries like Czech Republic and Slovakia and so on, we are always going to be reacting to oppression in people's Europe. Having been there over the last few days and speaking

to teachers there who are very nice people, you ask them 'where are the Roma?', 'oh, they live up there', 'but why are they over there?', 'because that is where they live', 'do the children go to school?', 'no, not in our school'.

### **Philippa**

Which is interesting because the school is being threatened with closure because they haven't got enough children. So I turned around and said 'well if you had Roma children in your school, it would be full!' But she didn't respond.

### **Hilary**

There were some aspects of the conversation that were much more disturbing. We were thinking, how can we use this project to change hearts and minds in the Czech Republic? It isn't the Roma that have to change, it's the people that are putting them into school or renaming them something else other than special schools. It's a big leap isn't it?

### **Brian**

We gotta export DreamMakers!

### **Barby**

But we also have massive problems here because the Traveller community is treated in the same way. Lots of communities are treated in very similar ways. I love what Kabir said. Especially recently since this young man got killed, people are being

treated extremely badly and it's being continued and perpetuated. So this offers an opportunity to have these sorts of things opened up. One of the things that we spoke about is this dissemination and this is potentially a way that artists have to think differently about what we do next. Maybe there is an intervention into education systems or other things that kind of make an offer that's open...

### **Philippa**

The interesting thing is we don't have it in our school community. We don't have the issues, I don't think, at all. Nobody's pointed out... so there can be a solution because we've got 2000 children and we haven't got... you know, with 44 different nationalities.

### **Brian**

Yeah, it is different in scale in Eastern Europe. It's very deep and it's very much focused on one community. I agree, I'm not saying we've got it all right and they've got it all wrong, but it's profound. I do think some countries like Romania have moved further forward because there are more Roma so the government has had to come to terms with it. Whereas Czech Republic is actually a relatively small percentage.

## **REPRESENTATION OF GYPSIES, ROMA AND TRAVELLERS AND THE MEDIA**

report written by Lucy Fremlova

A lunchtime roundtable entitled "The representation of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers and the media" took place at 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning on 2 July 2013, from 1pm to 4.30pm. The aim of the roundtable is to have an informed in-depth debate about, gain more insight into and improve journalists' understanding of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers (GRT) when reporting on the communities.

The following people participated in the roundtable: Adam Weiss of the AIRE Centre (currently European Roma Rights Centre), Jason Bergen of Migrant Voice, Nadia Manganello of The Big Issue, Andrew Hadley of Momentum, Barby Asante, Eva Sajovic, Delaine Le Bas, Damian

LeBas, Keely Mills, Artur Conka of the Community Channel, Ronke Osinowo and Katherine Quarmby.

Fotis Filippou of Amnesty International (International Secretariat) and Don Flynn of the Migrants Rights Network sent their apologies shortly before the event started.

Independent inclusion, equalities and human rights consultant Lucie Fremlova introduced the guiding theme of the roundtable: the social, cultural and political mechanisms in the current media discourse that create divisions between mainstream and marginalised identities, 'insiders' and 'outsiders' in British society. She contrasted the issue of the high

degree of community participation by members of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities in the project DreamMakers and other projects around the UK with some of the current patterns in reporting on GRT communities by British tabloids and some mainstream media outlets which tend to paint distorted and incorrect representations of these communities, portraying them as asocial, criminal, illegal and generally unwilling to participate or to be included. This type of unethical reporting was exemplified by a story about an early morning raid targeting Romanian Roma living at the disused football ground at Hendon the Telegraph ran on 26 June, 2013. She commented on some of the problematic aspects of using expressions such as “illegal Romanian immigrants” and the level of distortion of the truth in relation to the rights and entitlements of EU nationals. She suggested that at times such poor reporting is unfortunately endorsed by some mainstream media outlets such as the BBC and there seems to be a complete disconnect from the reality that goes on in the lives of most Roma, Gypsies and Travellers. In fact, it appears there are two separate worlds: articles of this type, which tend to feature shorthand, prefabricated half-truths and information taken out of context on the one hand and community based projects such as DreamMakers on the other, the outcomes of which show a high level

of participation by GRT communities. Analogies were established between the raid, previous operations, such as the operation targeting Romanian Roma at Marble Arch in the spring of 2012, and local/national reporting on issues relating to site provision and planning permissions for Gypsies and Travellers. Emphasis was placed on the fact that Anti-Gypsyism, unlike in the case of other BME communities or Jews, is the last bastion of publicly endorsed racism.

In his presentation, writer and Editor of Travellers Times Damian Le Bas explored the relationship between GRT communities, photography and the media. By showing a series of randomly selected photographs made by various photographers, he demonstrated the diversity of the different communities settled throughout Europe, Turkey and Brazil. He also emphasised the level of (in) discretion journalist may or may not exercise when interpreting ‘stories’ portraying Roma, Gypsies and Travellers. In a sequence of captioned photos, he also showed the level of racism endorsed by TV shows such as *My Big Gypsy Wedding* by juxtaposing it with slogans such as “Bigger. Fatter. Blacker” or “Bigger. Fatter. Jewer.”

In a series of activities, poet Keely Mills touched upon the issue of (self)representation and self(identification/identity). Through

the first workshop/presentation entitled *Behind the Headline is the Heartline*, each participant challenged their own identity and possible stereotypes and used those perceived perimeters that media already exerts to explore these. Each participant wrote a three word headline to describe themselves to the others in the group. They were instructed to write the first word as though *The Daily Mail* had described them, the second word as though *The Guardian* had described them, then the third word as though *Channel Four* had described them. This was followed by a fortune telling exercise and an exchange of thoughts. Finally, each participant had to write a three word headline based on the fortune telling exercise and the final question was how this real truth became part of how we are perceived more and how to let others know this in active ways.

Following the workshop, there was a plenary discussion among the participants. It was suggested that education is the way forward for GRT communities as it changes the established social order. Artur Conka of the Community Channel noted what role education has played in his life and how it changes the way in which people look at him when he travels to Slovakia, his country of origin which his parents left when he was eight. However, it was also noted that it is important to establish

in which ideology/political order education is delivered; the same was said of integration policies, which, in the case of Roma in Eastern Europe, have served to reinforce the status quo. Reclaiming one’s own identity and representation and establishing “one’s own brand” were also proposed as significant steps forward in the process of changing the overall perspective on and representation of GRT communities. Suggestions were made, too, that effective participation, including effective political participation and voting, can contribute to the changing of attitudes and they should go hand in hand with the aforementioned processes in relation to reclaiming one’s identity.

Photographer and film maker Artur Conka, from the Community Channel, made an intervention on how Community Channel has been portraying GRT communities in their June series in which he himself and Damian Le Bas were involved also as TV presenters. He also presented his own artistic film-making activities, such as a recent documentary film about *Lunxhëri IX*. Since he put it on youtube, the video was watched by more than 49 thousand people. Regretfully, most of the comments under the video were racist.

A number of participants responded to Artur’s presentation, particularly in relation to racist behaviour online. It was noted that racist comments of



that type are a reflection of the true state of our societies find. However, they have to be treated and worked with as such as they offer insight into the level of prejudice relating to Roma, Gypsies and Travellers. It was also noted that many people are unaware of the racist language/terminology they use as it has permeated common usage to such a high degree. However, if people are willing to engage in face to face discussions rather than in online affronts, it signals a certain open-mindedness on their side and willingness to communicate. It is in meaningful contacts and communication that changes in attitudes can start to emerge.

Writer Katherine Quarmby presented the racist and hostile treatment a number of Meriden Romani Gypsy families received from the local settled community, headed by Meriden RAID and the local parish councillors, in response to their settling in a local greenbelt area the Midlands. She detailed what tactics and strategies were employed to drive away the families who, aided by a number of non-Romani Gypsy neighbours, had been subject to racially motivated assaults, wrongful accusations of fly tipping, racist graffiti and discrimination against a disabled female community member.

Ronke Osinowo, author of *I Bring You Tilbury Town*, explored the issue of representing the self, drawing on

personal experience of a child of Nigerian origin fostered by Romany Gypsy parents at a time of increased community tensions, social unrest, race riots and high unemployment.

After the event finished, Eva Sajovic and Lucie Fremlova evaluated the afternoon, making a number of observations. Lucie Fremlova emphasised the complex and sensitive nature of the topics discussed and observed that there was marked difference of opinion among the participants, all of whom represent like-minded people in terms of ethical representation by the media. She also thought a different approach to the topic has been taken by those participants who are artists as opposed to those who work on advocacy. She concluded that both approaches complemented each other and suggested that it was a good start which could be followed up by a series of more focused round-table discussions/events.

In relation to possible follow up events, Eva Sajovic noted the example of APG (Artist Placement Group) initiated by Barbara Steveni and John Latham, active in the 60s/70s and instrumental in affecting change and having an impact on policy through artists placements and who can pride themselves for initiating artist placement. She suggested inviting the same as well as new people and organisations such as Media for Development.

Other possible next steps: creating a watchdog coalition of organisations who would communicate and meet regularly and respond to incorrect and/or unethical reporting by the media.

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## PARTNERS

**West of Scotland Regional Equality Council (WSREC)** is a charity organisation working for a just society which gives everyone an equal chance to learn, work and live free from discrimination and prejudice and from the fear of harassment and violence. Working primarily with minority ethnic communities across all 'protected characteristics' our aims are:

- To work towards the elimination of discrimination in all its forms in the West of Scotland
- To reduce inequality and promote a culture of human rights
- To promote good community relations between all people of all communities in the West of Scotland

For more information on WSREC services contact us on:

Tel: 0141 337 6626 or [admin@wsrec.co.uk](mailto:admin@wsrec.co.uk)

**Thomas Deacon Academy** is located in a residential suburb in the cathedral city of Peterborough in Cambridgeshire. The city has a population of around 186,000 and has grown much faster than the national average, mainly as a result of immigration. The number of ethnic and language communities reflects the changes in this diverse city. Our academy opened in September 2007 for 2200 students aged 11-18 years, specialising in maths and science. 44% of the students are from ethnic minority backgrounds, including migrant and refugee people. There are about 40 languages spoken and all students are encouraged to raise their aspirations, widen their horizons and strive for excellence. Our involvement in the DreamMakers project provided a small group of students, from Roma, Irish traveller and White British heritage, with the opportunity to be creative, learn new skills and celebrate their own identity in the school and the wider community. [www.thomasdeaconacademy.com](http://www.thomasdeaconacademy.com)

**The Children's Society Roma/New Migrants Project** is a part of the New Londoners Programme. New Londoners have been working with young refugees, Roma and migrants since 1996 and aim to support young people and families in fulfilling their potential. We do this by assisting them in accessing essential services, helping them to voice their concerns and supporting them in lobbying and campaigning for their rights.

**The Achievement, Cohesion & Integration Service (ACIS)** is a Bolton Council service within the Children's Services Department. ACIS supports families who are new to the UK and speak English as an additional language (EAL). The focus of ACIS is to receive and assist international new arrival families from across the globe in accessing education; these can include refugees, asylum seekers, EU migrants, migrants from outside the EU, Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families (GRT). Sign-posting families to other support agencies is also a key role.

**Lucie Fremlova** is an independent inclusion, equalities and human rights consultant, researcher and an international practitioner in the domain of human rights, particularly minority, Roma, sexual and reproductive rights, and the movement of Roma within the EU, with extensive advocacy, policy, research and programme management experience from working in the UK and mainland Europe. She has sixteen-year knowledge of the situation of human/Roma/minority rights in Europe and the same length of experience of working with survivors and victims of racism, discrimination, segregation, coercive sterilisation and racially motivated hate crime.

[www.luciefremlova.co.uk](http://www.luciefremlova.co.uk)

**Bolton** is a former mill town in Greater Manchester in the North West of England. It has a population of approximately 160,000 but the wider metropolitan borough has a population of approximately 280,000. It's community consists of many different faiths and ethnicities and celebrates this diversity with support from the local Council. Bolton has a good record of welcoming and integrating new and emerging communities. Many were attracted by the cheap housing which was a left-over of the Victorian boom during the industrial era. The initial Roma settlers in Bolton came as asylum seekers before Accession to the EU and were placed by the Home Office. After May 2004 new families chose to settle in Bolton based on the community links established with the initial settlers. These include Romanian, Hungarian, Czech, Slovak, Macedonian and Polish peoples. Currently the largest group of Roma are Hungarian.




**198 Contemporary Arts and Learning** is a visual arts space in Brixton, South London, boldly pushing boundaries while giving a voice to under-represented creative individuals, communities and cultures. Our three strands of work – Art, Education and Enterprise – offer a platform for the unseen and unheard. We provide routes to empowerment through building aspiration, nurturing artistic talent and widening engagement with the arts. We work with emerging creative and cultural professionals, marginalised youth, community elders and audiences interested in inter-disciplinary work. We use the interaction between diverse cultures, generations and social backgrounds as a catalyst for the creative process. As we do so, we confront and challenge social norms by making visible previously hidden or ignored issues relating to social change and emerging cultural identities. [www.198.org.uk](http://www.198.org.uk)

**Paul Hamlyn Foundation** is an independent funder operating across the arts, education and social justice. Its mission is to help people realise their potential and increase their quality of life. [www.phf.org.uk](http://www.phf.org.uk)

**Eva Sajovic** is a Slovene born artist photographer, living and working in London. Her focus is on socially engaged, collaborative practice, in particular working with marginalised communities or those affected by processes of change. She works in collaboration with the individual subject, revealing personality through images and words as a counter to negative social stereotypes. Eva has been working with Roma communities for a number of years. She is also Associated Lecturer at Central Saint Martins. [www.evasajovic.co.uk](http://www.evasajovic.co.uk)





**DreamMakers** is a UK-wide project by young people between the ages of 13 and 19, based around the themes of Identity, Community, Dreams and Aspirations. It has been designed by 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning and Eva Sajovic and supported by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation.

The goals of the project were to support the young people to develop their powers of self-expression, to view their cultural background as valuable in the context of a multicultural society, as well as tackling prejudice in the wider community.

**DreamMakers** reflects the objectives of 198 Contemporary Arts and Learning, an arts organisation that provides representation for diverse communities and advocates for change through art.

[www.dreammakersuk.com](http://www.dreammakersuk.com)

*"To put this into context with the project, what I like is giving people chances, empowering them to do things, to feel important, not to be only an object of research, but to be empowered to demonstrate what they see and how they see it works."*

**Petr Torak**

*"What I'm thinking about is that within the nation state or the city state there are competitive narratives about what citizenship and belonging and participation mean. Is this project, are the things we're talking about here, pointing to another intervention?"*

**Gilane Tawadros**



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