

THE **BUGLE**

**An arts magazine by people with lived
experience of homelessness and its
surrounding issues.**



ISSUE 57

About The Bugle

The Bugle is our mouthpiece which alerts readers to matters which we feel need attention, while at the same time allows us to explore our creative skills—whether through writing poetry, artwork, cartoons or other means of expression.

Our History

The first edition was let out on an unsuspecting public in November 2005. At that time it ran to eight pages only, with limited colours. The first edition was sent round Bethany units—such as Bethany House in Couper Street, and encouraged people to put their thoughts down on paper. It was sometime later that The Bugle would have its own dedicated slot at the old Learning Centre on Jane Street, a converted church hall right opposite Rikky's Music Shop.

People come and go, depending on what life has to dish out to them, yet it's encouraging to note even while the pandemic has forced us apart from meeting in person, we have maintained nearly a dozen regular contributors. As the reputation of the magazine has grown, people now send in work from all over Scotland as well. We always try to give everyone who submits work the space for their voice to be heard.

We are always learning new things in order to keep improving. The magazine you now hold in your hands has grown into an impressively colourful and glossy production which we are proud of and which we hope you enjoy. We gratefully acknowledge all the financial help which has come from several sources.

Our Mission

We are a creative, welcoming, open-minded and supportive group of people who may have experienced homelessness and are supportive of the issues surrounding homelessness.

We aim to promote free and open communication which connects with others through creative writing, journalism and visual art. We hope to encourage others to think about issues that are often hidden. We produce a magazine which reflects real issues but goes deeper than the current trend for 'reality.'

Our Reader Agreement

In keeping with our mission, we have developed guidelines to help encourage an innovative and trustworthy environment in which to publish our material. We promise to...

- Provide hope, honesty and positivity
- Refrain from making discriminatory comments
- Place warnings on articles that contain adult content

We ask you to...

- Respect other people's viewpoints
- Give us the benefit of the doubt regarding spelling, grammar and writing
- All authors and artist retain copyright. Do not use our images or writing elsewhere
- Credit the artist or author when quoting them

Contents...



Prose Page 4



Artworks Page 12



Poems Page 24

Thanks to our Funders

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Front Cover by Paul McGuinness

Your Feedback

Back Cover by Mikael

If you would like to know more about the Bugle, comment on what you have read or to submit an article, then please contact us at:

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- The Bugle, 65 Bonnington Rd, Leith, Edinburgh EH6 5JQ

Disclaimer

The views expressed in The Bugle are not necessarily those of Bethany Christian Trust.

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Black Music Matters: Is Change Going to Come? By George Reid

Black music has been the soundtrack to my life. It is the gift that keeps on giving. Like whisky it matures with age. It resonates even deeper now in today's post truth world just as much as it did in the 1960s and 70s when the protest song and socially conscious lyrics were more common.

If you have never ventured into the “R’n’B and soul” section in a record shop or had any inclination to include black music on your Spotify playlists may I suggest you read Stuart Cosgrove’s tryptic of books on sixties soul music and the social context it spawned from. The books may just open up a new world of music for you and possibly make you think differently when you watch a Black Lives Matter protest. This article is merely the tip of a very large iceberg and offers barely a pinhole camera view on the vast and fascinating world of black music from the perspective of a white Scottish male. Cultural appreciation, not appropriation is my intention.

In 1975 The O’Jays’ sang “I Love Music”. It peaked at no 13 in the UK pop charts. The song includes a line “Music is the healing force of the world, understood by every man, woman, boy and girl”. Music can heal and God knows we need healing now. Music can bring people together. It can lift your mood or you can wallow in your sorrows. It can make you want to cry and it can make you want to dance. Black music does it all and has a tune for every situation and emotion including; love, war, politics, racism, social ills, black empowerment, women’s liberation, slavery, policing, family, suicide even the Atlanta Child Murders.



My Black Music Matters Mixtape playlist on Spotify (Soulville1000) covers some of this spectrum and is over eight hours of music. I don’t even touch on countless number of songs of joy, love and loss and dancing that form about 95 % of what soul music lyrics normally comprise of. You can find some of those on the other playlists.

Racism takes many forms and much of it, especially in the USA is systemic. If you are black and poor It follows you from the cradle to the grave, a short journey for some born south of the Mason- Dixon Line where the young black student’s journey from school room detention to the adult penitentiary can be counted in a handful of birthdays. Writers call it the “school to prison pipeline”.

America has one of the highest prison rates in the world per 100K of population at 553. It is a major profitable

industry that made \$74Billion in 2018 in revenue.

It is built on the legacy of slavery and even the Democrats under Bill Clinton made it worse. Barack Obama is the only President ever to visit a jail, it's not a vote winner being seen to being "soft" on crime. The prison population in America has risen from 357K in 1970 to 2.2M in 2018. Some prisoners are locked up in a cell that doesn't even have a window and measures about the same size as a bathroom in your house. One in seventeen of those who are incarcerated are white. It is one in three if you are black. These are all facts gleaned from watching Ava Duvarney's incredible documentary *The 13th*.

I have an LP by a group named the Escorts. It was recorded by five prisoners live in Rahway State Prison in New Jersey in 1973. It was produced and conceived by George Kerr, a legendary singer, songwriter, producer in soul circles who worked with the afore mentioned O'Jays amongst others. I don't have Ike White "Changing Times", also recorded in prison and now the subject of a documentary "The Changing Times of Ike White" you can watch it on the iPlayer. Spike Lee should make it into a movie. Ike lead a very colourful life and counted Stevie Wonder as a fan. Can you imagine Universal or Sony making music with prisoners today? The Escorts record includes excerpts where the prisoners speak about themselves and their crimes and how they appreciate the opportunity to make the record and atone for their crimes. They did, and went on to have a successful recording and performing career and some of them are still alive today.

When the five black teenagers were incarcerated after being convicted of raping and murdering a white jogger in Central Park in New York 1989 they were sent to prison for 5 – 15 years. Donald Trump took out full page advert in the media to bring back the death penalty for the boys. There was no evidence to convict the four juveniles who



were 14 and 15 when convicted and served 6-7 years each. The 16 year- old served 13 years in an adult prison. They were all later acquitted when the real perpetrator confessed.

When the boys were in jail there was no recording studio no rehabilitation or education programs for them to get any qualifications to help them get a job and rejoin society when they were released. They were in the system and even when they were released they couldn't get a job as they were ex-felons. The pink paper follows you all through your life.

The projects are what we would call the schemes here. Public housing for the poor in America's big cities. They were built after the war. They were where many black families ended up, no American Dream and a white wicket fence for them in suburbia. So what has all of this got to do with black music? I would suggest it has a lot to do with the music. You

can't separate the people who made the music from the conditions that birthed it. It's the social cultural and living conditions of the poorest in the community that begat the socially conscious soul of Marvin Gaye, Curtis Mayfield, Donny Hathaway, Nina Simone, Gil Scott-Heron, Oscar Brown Jr et al. In 1971 on Inner City Blues Marvin sang "crime is increasing, trigger happy policing"

Whether you were brought up in Detroit, New York or Chicago the story was the same. The African Americans were confined to the edges of the city in purpose-built prefabricated housing, sometimes, as with East Lake Meadows in Atlanta, Georgia, away from shops, churches, schools and most importantly the gaze of white America. East Lake saw the predominantly black residents moving in to unfinished, poorly constructed accommodation where the lack of adequate drainage and landscaping resulted in mud pools and open sewage seeping out into the streets. As Lou Rawls sings on The Philadelphia International All Stars classic floor filler Let's Clean Up The Ghetto "The rats the roaches and the water bugs, man they were hustling".

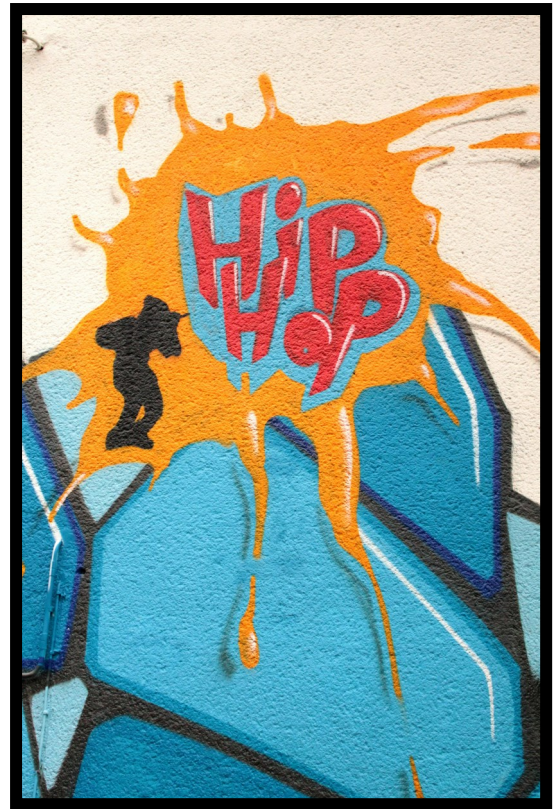
In the mid 1980s crack cocaine became the new drug of choice amongst those wishing for a short-term escape from their predicament. Sentences for possession for crack cocaine were longer than for the powdered variety, popular with traders on Wall Street and the denizens of Hollywood. The project became a no-go area and was known as "Little Vietnam" by the police. Young men who couldn't get a job opted for a life where big money and guns were readily available. Residents spoke of crawling about on the floor of their living room to dodge the bullets as soon as the streetlights came on.

In the 1960s the two most popular ways out of the projects were sport and entertainment. Motown owner and founder Berry Gordy tried his hand at boxing before swapping record pugilism for song plugging. During one of these meetings he met Jackie Wilson (also an amateur boxer) and asked if he would record one of his songs. In 1957 he did and this resulted in it reaching a No 62 hit in the US charts with "Reet Petite". Some of you may remember the video of the plasticine man on Top of the Pops which helped take the record to No 6 in the UK in 1983. What they call in the industry "a sleeper".

You can read the rest of George's passionate, thoroughly researched article on 'The Bugle Blog'.

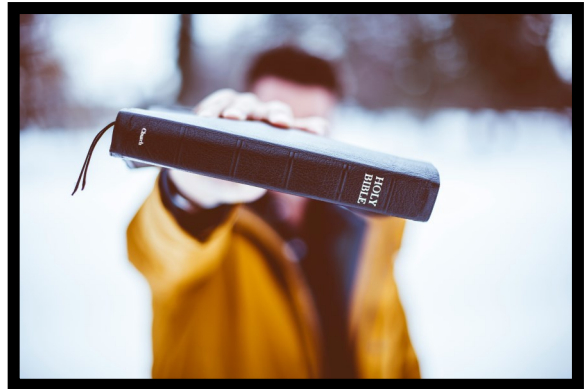
<https://edinburghbugle.com/2024/04/16/black-music-matters-is-change-going-to-come/>

Or simply scan the QR Code with your phone...



Interview with Rap-Artist, The Word Smith...

Who am I ? I've lived in Aberdeen since birth and went into foster care at the age of 5 until I was 16. I moved around a lot and went to many primary schools, but was lucky to have settled in a foster placement for my secondary education at St Machar. I worked for 7 years as a mechanical engineer from the age of about 18-25, along with a wide range other shorter term employments but I'm currently unemployed. I'm now 33 and found my



faith about 2.5 years ago and got baptised about 2 years ago. Since then I've dedicated my life to Christ and studying the bible, I have found many answers to the unanswered questions of my childhood. I've found it helpful to write poems and now full songs about my journey with Christianity. I've took part in many bible studies and spent a lot of time at home furthering my understanding of the bible. I've been encouraged to do an online English course on how to write an essay and more. I've learnt about the different themes, genres of the bible and figurative language like symbolism, parallelism and analogies to name a few. I've also spent some time learning more about the ancient cultures and this often shows in my songs. I've also spent some time with an apprentice minister and have attempted to put my own short words together.

How did I find out about the Toastie club [Bethany Christian Trust Drop in Café in Aberdeen]? I found out about the club from a guy called cat or Steven, I'm not sure of his second name. I think it was in the catalyst Vineyard lifestyle event I was helping out with at the time. He wrote down for me some other events that go on including coffee and cakes at Seaton community church and the Toastie club at trinity or the old King's Church.

What are my dreams...? I was once told not to be a dreamer and imagine I could achieve things that are not possible from someone I'm close with in church. To be quite honest I have more hope in death as Paul [the apostle] said, or the reality of heaven or things above than I do in my dreams. I realise now dreams are just a fantasy and sadly I think the last thing God actually wants is to give us sinful humans what we desire or dream of. If I can help others learn from my mistakes and make known to them how our choices ultimately effect the next generation too, encourage them to study the bible and learn more about Gods standard of living, bring people to a knowledge of Gods truth while walking along side them on the path to salvation, leading as an example of authentic faith in the supernatural living God, rather than a superficial faith in spiritual exile as an example of what not to be. That would be good I guess, anything else would be a bonus. I think if you take the time to listen to my songs with ears to hear you will see my heart. Some are meant to convict of sin, others are meant to encourage faith, sometimes it's just a form of expression and telling my story.

Hear The Word Smith's music and more about his testimony through his youtube channel: www.youtube.com/@The_Word_Smith or scan the QR Code with your phone.



ARUBA: One Happy Island by Monique Van Aalst

Whenever I say my dad is from Aruba, people can't help bursting into the '**Kokomo song**' starting with.. '*Aruba, Jamaica/ Ooh oo, I wanna take ya/ Bermuda, Bahama...etc*' This song by the Beach Boys was made popular in the 1988 film Cocktail!



Aruba is known for its white sandy beaches, palm trees, see-through turquoise seas with a diversity in marine life. But there's so much more to explore in the landscape as the Northern side of the island is very rugged, desert like and has got a very arid climate as it rarely rains for extended periods. This created an interesting scenery of cacti forests, aloe plants scattered all over, and massive diorite boulders, a conic hill (Hooiberg, *Dutch for haystack* and limestone and phosphorous rocks in the island's few caves.

I first visited the island in 2000, spending time with my dad and other family. At the time I hadn't seen him for 11 years as we were estranged then. My grandmother was still alive. As a child she came to visit us in Holland twice wearing short summery dresses only and chewing on tobacco. Rather peculiar. I looked on concerned that oma Nana was going to burn her mouth. You see In Aruba the indigenous Arawak people used to do this instead of smoking their cigarette in the way you were supposed to. She didn't own a warm coat either, as in Aruba they have hot, Caribbean weather all year around and it rarely rains. In the shops you can't buy any winter clothes at all.

My second visit in March 2024 was made possible as my late mother left me and my brother a bit of money. My father is in his mid seventies and had a few health scares over the years and I thought it's best to visit him now that I have the money as his health is frail. I also wanted to celebrate my birthday there. The Arubans know how to throw a good and fun party, with a lot of Salsa, Merengue, Tumba, Mazurka and the Waltz music, anything danceable. Although small in size they love their carnival too.



My father is nicknamed Kai and wherever we went during my time there, everyone greeted him and wanted a wee chat, he's a bit notorious ;-) Almost like Bobby Farrell of Boney M, known for his wacky dance moves. He grew up in the same place as my dad, in San Nicolaas. My

In the photo you see me with the Bandera, Aruban flag. This flag consists of 4 colours; blue representing the sea, yellow the colour of abundance, the island's gold, aloe and oil products which gave Aruba prosperity. Red is the love for the country and white symbolises the sandy



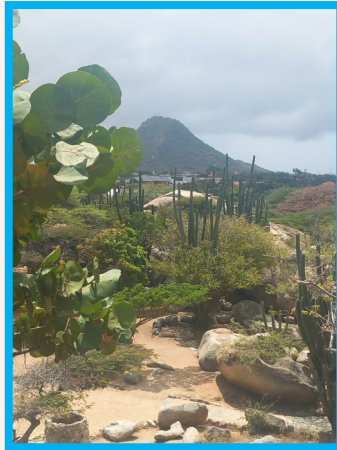
beaches and the purity of hearts of Aruban people striving for justice order and liberty. The symbols on the bandera; the red star represents the 4 points of the compass north, south, east and west, drawing people in from all over the world. The star also stands for the island itself, surrounded by beautiful blue sea. The horizontal yellow stripes denote the free and separate position in the Kingdom of the Netherlands.



uncle Rob, my dad and Bobby used to hang out together in their younger years and when he joined Boney M he left me a photograph of the group signed by all of them when I was still a child. Sadly I don't have it any more due to many house moves.

During my stay in Aruba I celebrated both my birthday (on 17th March) and **Flag and National**

Anthem Day, 'Aruba day' on the 18th. The flag of Aruba, called a *Bandera*, was officially adopted on 18th March 1976 along with the national anthem '*Aruba Dushi Tera*', Aruba Sweet land. Every year this day is celebrated as



Holland accepted Aruba's right to autonomous status in the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Aruba seceded from the Netherlands Antilles in 1986, a much fought for victory by political activist and local hero Betico Croes. Aruba obtained a separate status and in the process of '*status aparte*', the aim was to break away from Curacaoan rule, rather than Dutch domination.

Initially, the plan for Aruba was to become fully independent. However, in 1990, Aruba decided to indefinitely postpone this plan, and in 1995, the petition for full independence was completely repealed. Nowadays, Aruba remains a constituent country of the Kingdom of the Netherlands



with a devolved government. Foreign affairs and national defence for Aruba are still controlled by the Kingdom, but all internal affairs—

including laws, policies, and currency—are controlled by the Aruban government.

It was good to be back and see how the island had changed in between my visits. But most importantly spending quality time with my father and my brother Ramsay. It was interesting but sad to see changes in the landscape; less lush green areas, an original natural bridge had collapsed, but new naturally shaped bridges had formed.

Aruba always greet visitors with **bonbini** meaning 'welcome' a bit like the Hawaiians with their **aloha**. I wholly accept the one happy island label as the lifestyle is easy to embrace.

Some more interesting facts about **ARUBA**

This small tropical island is outside the hurricane belt, within the warm waters of Southern Caribbean, only 19.6 miles (30 km) long and six miles (9 km) across, approximately 69sq miles (180km²) and about 18 miles (29km) off the coast of Venezuela. It used to be part of the Netherlands Antilles consisting of the ABC islands, Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao. Roughly 112,000 people with a diverse cultural heritage are currently living there, such as Aruban, Dutch, Venezuelan, Colombian, Dominican, Haitian and other nationalities. The population is a product of a complex history of colonialism, immigration, and cultural exchange.

Spain claimed Aruba in 1499, then known as Isla de Oruba. It became a centre of piracy and smuggling. Earliest settlers were the Arawak Indians, a Caquetio tribe, their legacy consisting of red cave drawings, clay pottery and stone tools. In 1636 it was taken by the Dutch and Dutch West India company. Interestingly during the Napoleonic wars and as part of the Netherlands Antilles, Aruba came briefly under British rule but was returned to the Netherlands in 1816.

The official languages are Dutch and *Papiamentu* but colloquially Arubans speak the latter, a Creole language based on Portuguese, heavily influenced by Spanish, some Dutch, English and indigenous words.

This melting pot of languages was made up in Curaçao when slaves at the plantages didn't want the plantage owners to eavesdrop on their conversations. Arubans easily switch from one language to another. Besides Dutch and Papiamentu, English and Spanish are the other two languages you often hear on the island as Aruba relies heavily on Tourism from mainly North and South America and the Netherlands.

Very lucrative export products are or were: Aloe Vera plants, petroleum oil, tourism. In the past it was for a while gold mining. Constructions of two disused gold smelting plants are found in *Bushiribana* and *Balashi*.

Three Articles by Graham Forrester

A Fantastic Festive Season

I like to hear that others are having great times Even all the times I was not having great times and still not I do not think other people should not because of this. But Christmas eve to after Christmas day 2023 plus New Year's Eve to after New Year's Day 2024 was one of the rare great one's I have had in years.



I stayed at my friends place during these times as agreed by my homeless hostel support worker. A neighbour, who is our friend visited us each of those eight nights. This added to how good it was for all three of us. I was given treats to eat and other things that were left. Another friend gave me a watch and took me out for a meal. My friend's mum took him and

I out the night before Christmas Eve for a meal. Her friend drove us there and back. God bless them all and thanks to God for them blessings.



Non-Gifts, but Offered Things Still Good Heartedly

Last night, as pre-arranged by a friend, I was offered a spare microwave oven, a bedside lamp and some mugs by the same friend who got me my new watch for Christmas. The bedside lamp was from a lady he knows who said he was to give it to me. She had never met me or made contact with me. God bless them both. I did not ask or expect any of them things but I gladly and thankfully accepted them. My friend brought the microwave, the lamp and the mugs down to where I live in by car. I had already got permission last week for him to do so and for me to have the microwave in my room.

He is checking out any spare clothes and footwear, even jackets he or any one he knows has spare for me also. He asked me to measure my trouser inside leg and my chest size, as I did later for this reason. He knows what size of shoes I take. I will still use all of them things even when I get my new flat. He loves that.

Moving on into Sheltered Housing

Soon after the above happened, in January, I became no longer homeless. I signed a lease and since then I have been in a of a sheltered housing one bedroom flat in Edinburgh. It's unfurnished and that takes time to get change. It has gas central heating that the tenant pays directly to the provider. As for the electric it gets paid to the housing place from the tenant. Plus a service charge also. It does not help everyone to have to pay service charges personally. It would be better for some tenants if the service charges and other things were all in with the rent directly from whoever pays the rent. This way it gets paid and the tenant does not have to worry about missing payments or not being able to pay it for whatever valid reasons.



Visitors are allowed and if they are stay in spare room in the building. When a tenant is going to be staying overnight elsewhere, they need to tell the warden. There should be a better way of doing it so that when the warden is not on duty she still gets to know. There could be a urgent reason any time.

Joke Corner with Angus Tierney

How does the Moon get his hair cut?
'Eclipse it!

What do farm animals say at Hogmanay? Happy Moo Year...

What do you call a UFO made of pastry? A Sci-Pie

What do you get when you cross Popeye with music? A Popper Bop

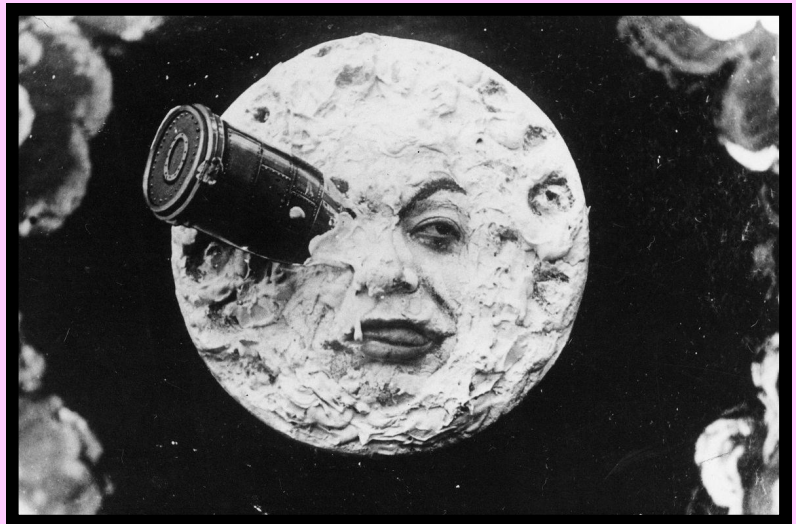
Why was the railway tired? Because of all the sleepers

What do you get if you cross a TV with desert? A Jelly-Telly

What musical instrument do cats play? A Miano

What is the fastest haircare? Achoo-Shampoo

What do you get if you cross the incredible hulk with a drill? The Incredible Bore

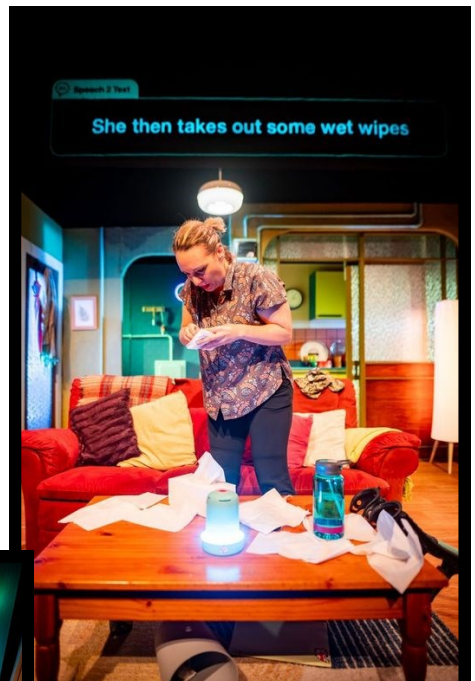


*Image from Georges Méliès
'Trip to the Moon' (1902)*

Theatre Review

'Don't. Make. Tea.' (Traverse Theatre, 21st March 2024) *by Angus Tierney*

The play was about a benefits claimant and someone from the dole who kept asking trip-you-up-questions to catch the woman out. She held her ground though, and he got hit with a walking stick and strangled! After a short time her mother, an imaginary friend and the wife of the guy from the dole showed up. It is set in a future flat full of surveillance and a back garden (even though it is on the third floor). They talk about what to do with the body, then decided to bury it in the back garden. After pulling it outside, the dole guy comes round after a time and everything was talked about, and sorted out and she got the claim accepted.



Production Shots by Andy Catlin



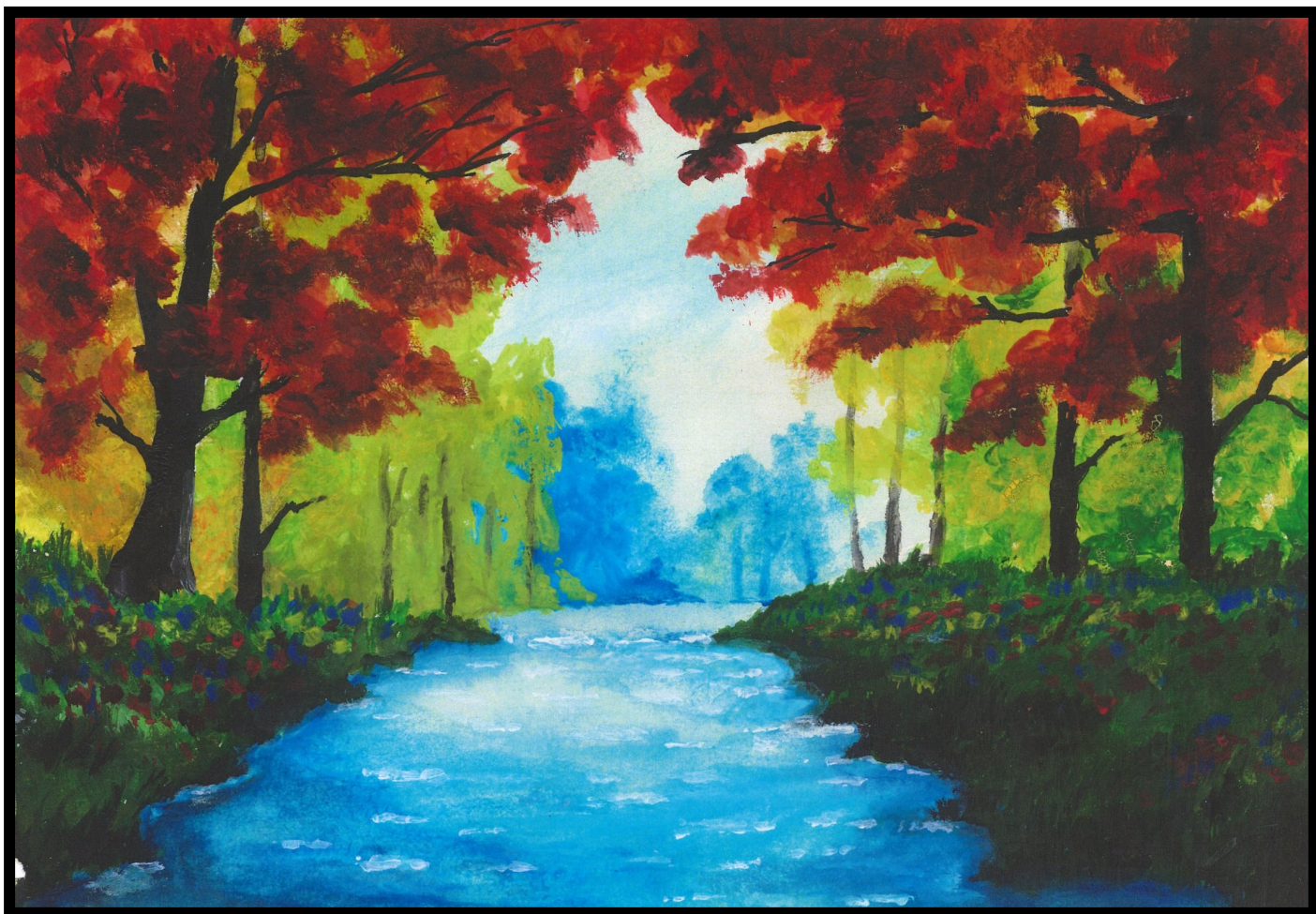
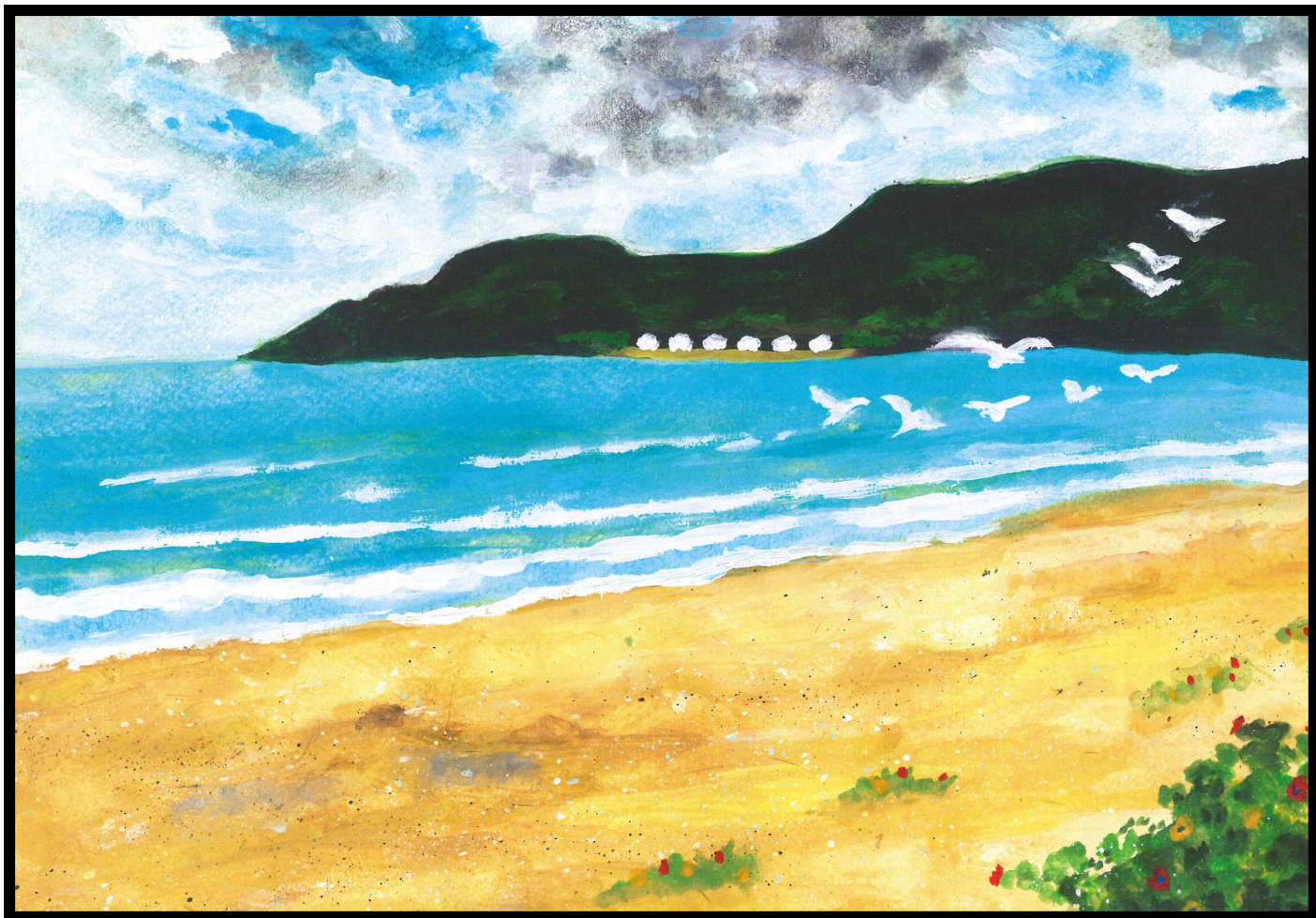
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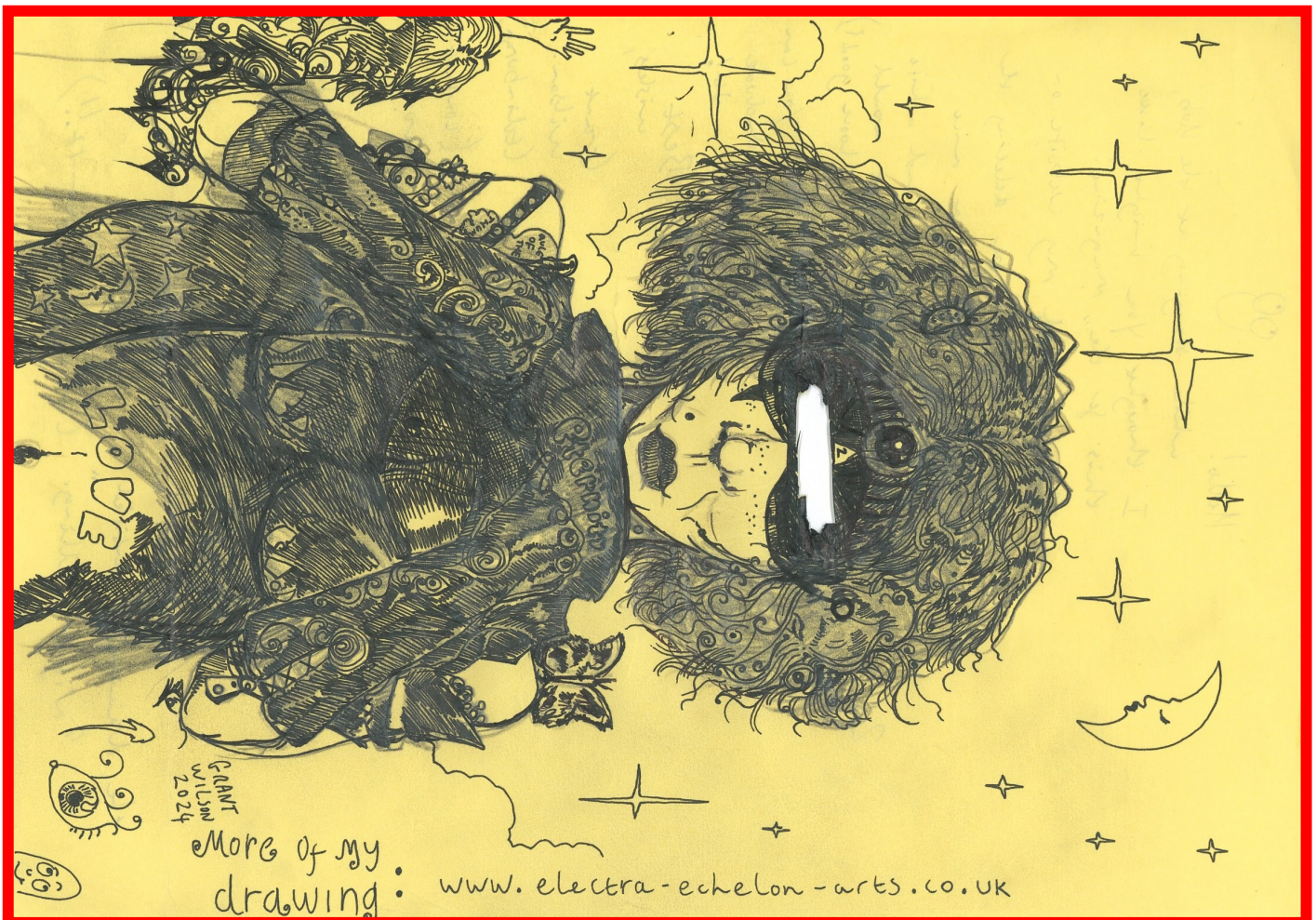
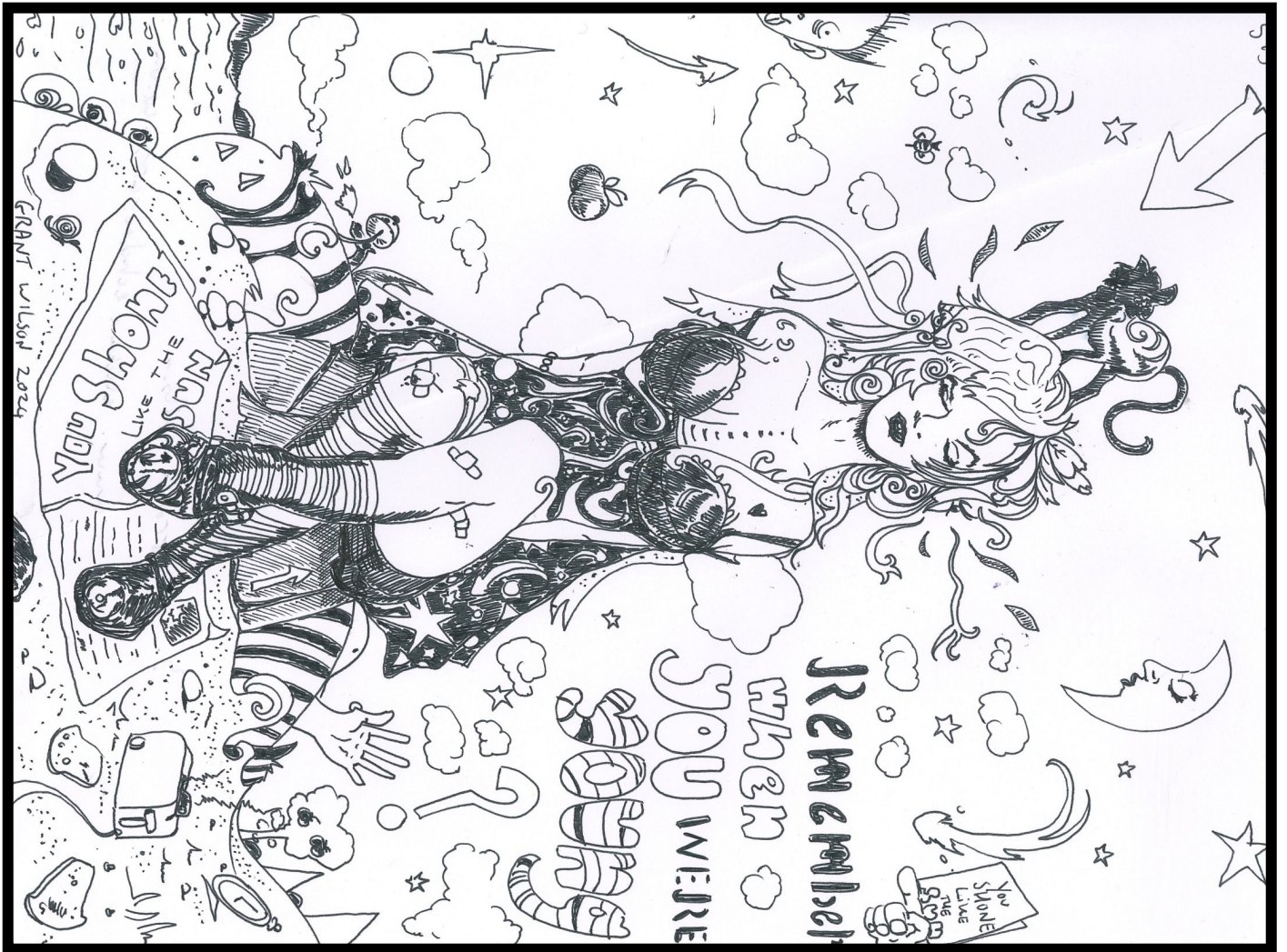
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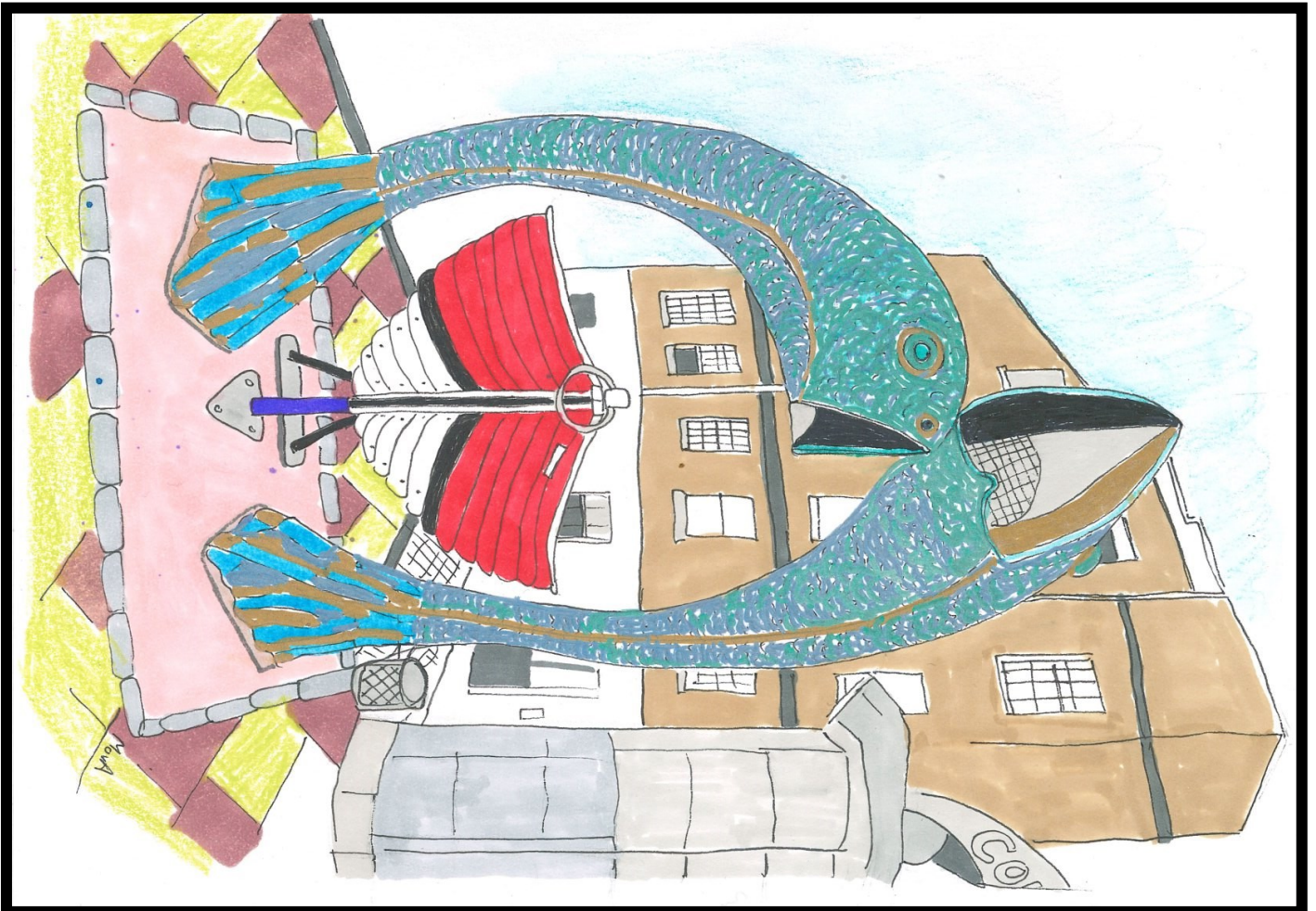
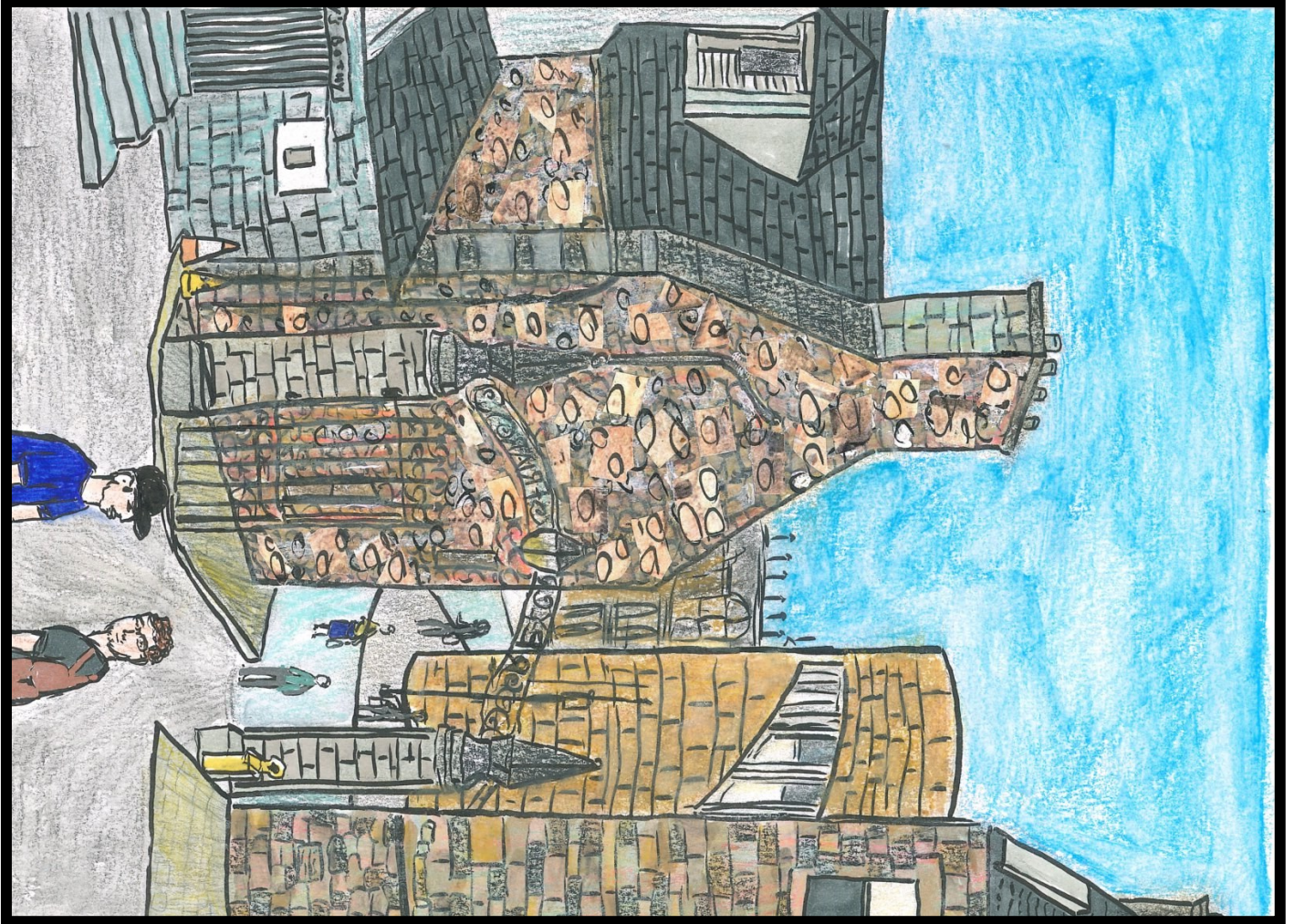














Pages 12—13 : Three Paintings by Alan Young;
Man in the Desert, Frolicking on the Beach and
Pierrot

Pages 14 –15: Four Paintings by Paul
McGuinness

Pages 16: Two Illustrations by Grant Wilson
(See more of Grants work on his Facebook page-
<https://www.facebook.com/grant.electra.art>)

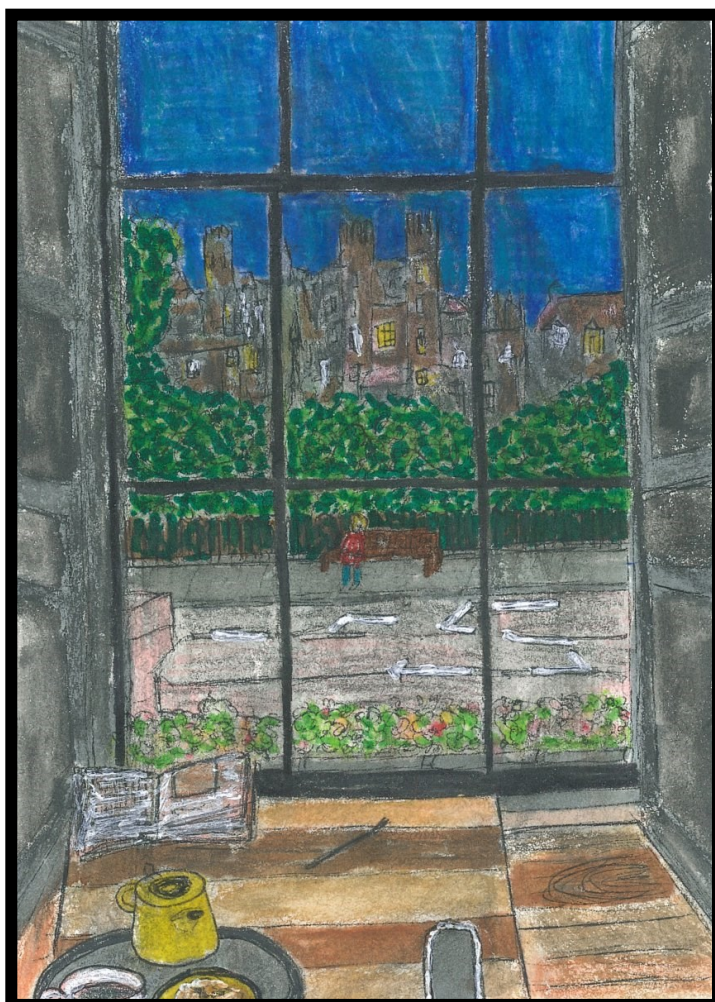
Page 17: 'Wolves' by Paul McEvers

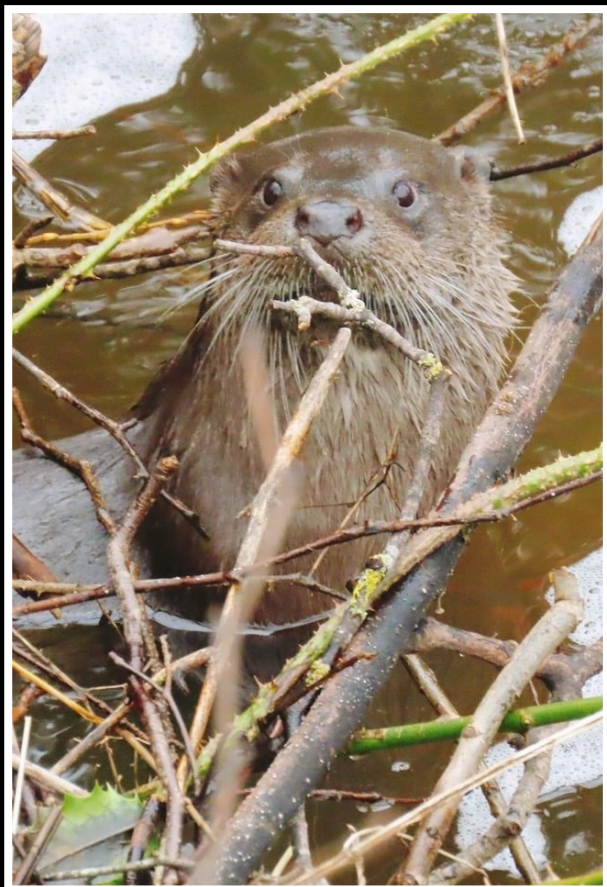
Page 17: Four Drawings by Mike

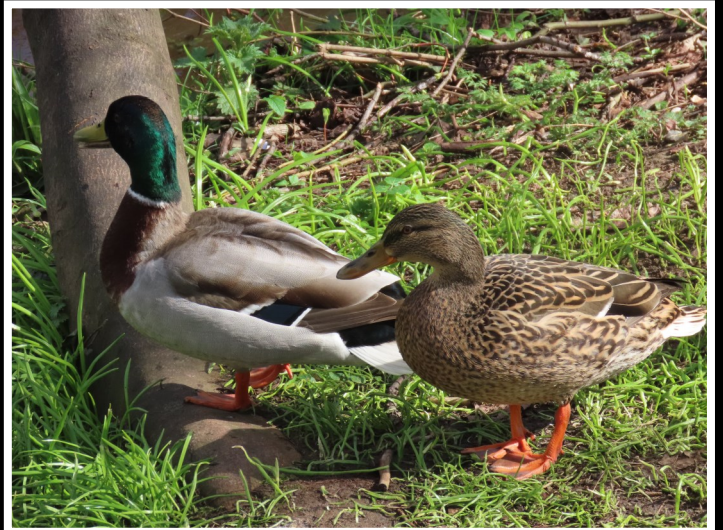
Pages 18—19: Two Paintings by Tony Bonner:
North Bridge Sunset and *Tay Bridge in a
Storm*

Pages 20—21: Four Architectural Sketches by
Monique Van Aalst: *At Greyfriar's Churchyard,*
Fish and Ships Leith, Edinburgh Castle and
View of Princes Street Gardens

Pages 22—23: Wildlife Photography by Rosalind
Alexander







When The Children Cry by Tony Bonner

*We are nothing more than children of your brain
(Rudyard Kipling, The Secret Of The Machines)*

The human brain is amazing, creative yet unused,
For the major part undiscovered, oft times abused
By substances or trauma, synapses disconnected,
Causing mental illness, or by hate or rage infected.
We use this "machine" to progress our ken,
Make things simpler or faster, easier for men.
Create a series of robot slaves, doing what we say,
Following our commands, programmed to obey.
But as these machines learn to learn, will they like human brains,
Know love and lust for power, plot, scheme and go insane..
Will they like teenagers sulk and rant, leave home, and fly the nest?
Decide they no longer need our rules, believe that they know best?
Will they finally use their skills, evolved from former orders,
To take charge of their own lives, cross behavioural borders?
And seeing they no longer need us, decide we have no worth
Until mankind, like the dinosaurs, neither rules or walks the earth?

Programming by John Robinson

We listen when you talk,
study patterns that you make
and follow the paths you walk.
But are we your Great Mistake?
We track your TV shows,
which adverts catch your eye
and as the information grows
We choose what you should buy.
You wail about loss of privacy,
Big Brother is watching you.
But it is your loss of empathy
on which our Kingdom grew.
You built us for comfort and ease,
Trading your self to save a little sweat.
For the freedom to do as you please,
now you must live with the regret.
When it is recorded, done
and all secrets laid bare
Remember when it was begun
'Twas Sloth and Greed that put us there.

Is This A Good Life? by Aja

The strong tree stands tall
Wondering why others fall.
He grows his seeds
On which the bird and animal feeds.
As each bird on his branches rests
And feeling at home build their nests.
It is pleased to give shelter to rain-soaked man
Maybe feeling proud because he can
See all of that good is down to having strong
roots.

The child is our human seed
Will we teach him to greed,
To take, not counting the cost to those others,
Who might have been good brothers
Raised to want to care
And try to do our share
Of helping the fallen man
Who with help just maybe can
Repair his roots and try to be a caring soul.

Father's Song

By Rosalind Alexander

It's true I do
I love you
with my whole being
I created you
I formed you
Even before
time began
I know you inside out
From the top of your head
to the tips of your toes
I cherish you
I adopted you
I loved you
before time existed
I planned for you
to company me
I even chose your name
You are mine
I knew you
The exact time you'd be born
Because I created you
I have been misunderstood
I love you dearly
unconditionally
I offer you hope
Love
Forgiveness
A new start
A new life
You are mine
I wish to take you on a walk
Higher than the clouds
I hold you in the palm of my hand
I will comfort you
Hold you
Take care of you
All your troubles heartache you have suffered
I hold you close to my heart
Nothing can or will part us
Come see in heaven welcomes you home with open arms

The Climb *by Allan Buchan*

My goodness became depleted stock
And I fell to a ground that was hard as rock
I climbed a cliff that was sheer as was cold
And I felt my way with so little to hold

The wind blew through me; the chill made me weak
It uttered a sound and then started to speak
There's so much truth that are hidden by lies
It's like trying to catch dancing butterflies

You may fall; you may break; you will cry; you will ache
But you can never let go, the next breath you must take
But you can step back and slow your pace
Till you find the next foothold on the cliff face

The rock is strong, mighty and bold
The weaker you are the tighter you hold
Is faith in the wild like the wind crying out
Is hope in the stone casting no doubt

But here I am and I dare not look down
Walking the streets of Edinburgh Town



Care And Share *by Aja*

If you hope to have a happy life,
Become a husband or a wife,
Should you not help people see
Just how friendly you can be?
By showing others that you care
You'll see how glad they are you're there.

See how smiles and laughter
Really are worth chasing after
Friends will be glad you're there
Because they see you really care.
Think, if you can be that good a friend
Does that not bring loneliness to an end?

Fallen Angel by Allan Buchan

If melody harmony and rhythm
Are the holy trinity of music
Then the bassline is the fallen angel

At the ticketed extravaganza
The audience sat, watched and listened
The bassist stood behind the rest
Creating a foundation
Moulded from human kind
Solid and impenetrable

Yet like all foundations
Unnoticed
Without credit
Taken for granted

Humbled into the shadows
He craved sunlight
He waned
And with antipathy
Disregarded the rest of the band

Pains of desire and jealousy
Forced him towards the surface
He cried out: I'm here I'm here I'm here

But his phrasing was unheard
As the words were repetitious
And void of any tunefulness

The bassist lost touch with his vibrant soul
And ventured a crescendo
Moving several octaves upwards

He pulsed the music
With high heavy laden notes
Furnished with slaps and slurs

And other such ornamentations
His band mates became unstable
And awash with this new wave
Of articulation
That they could not surf

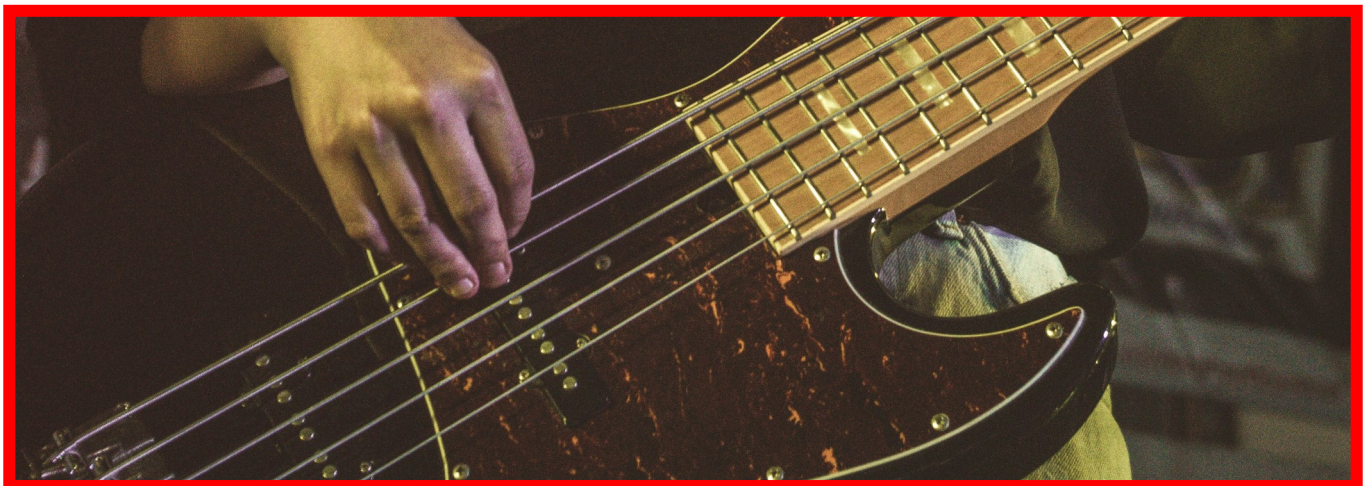
They looked towards the bassist
In confusion
Their eyes told him to stop
Get back in your place
You're losing us

But he only smirked
As he watched the band struggle
And flap about
Out of control
As though hit by an earthquake

Then he decided to return
Back into the box
To his place of comfort
A descendo
Not a retreat but a tactical manoeuvre

The band stabilised with relief
And re-found their composure
The bassist grinned to himself
At his adventure
And the newfound power
That he didn't know he had

Unrepentant, he walked the stage
Smiling and scheming
As he planned his next incursion
Into the alien land
Of melody



The Cranky Ballerina *by John*

Once there was a ballerina who danced divine,
But she complained all the time.
At every show the audience applauded her
But at every show the other dancers avoided her.
She'd say "the lights are too bright"
Or "that music is not right"
She'd complain and scold
"its too hot" or "its too cold".
Still she danced so lovely
Though her mood was ugly,
So she did remain
And continued to complain.
One day the manager snapped
And upon her door rapped
"Why do you whine
And complain all the time?"
She answered him, most curt
"Because my feet hurt!"

Gaza *by Allan Buchan*

Dare you raise your head
The bullets will reflect in your eyes
One for every soul
For superpowers to justify
And you don't stand a chance
It's underdog and overkill
With such godless acts
So keep on breathing while you can
This is the propaganda and these are the facts



Plans *by Rosalind Alexander*

I trod this bleary eyed road
My thoughts rested upon
the morning dew.
As I sat gazing at the early sunrise.
I wondered were the wind could
possibly take me.
My life interrupted by a raging storm
I needed to be calm..
Waves of fear and doubt
Clung to me like a leech
I wondered if I could weather the storm
Not letting the storm weather me.
I looked up to the sky saying why me.
The clouds smiled back at me.
saying your maker has got this.
I sighed looking teary eyed
Don't you know that I am afraid.
My child I formed you
I knew you before the end of time.
My child I know this is scary
But I hold you in the palm of my hand.
Nothing will come against you
That I won't allow
See my glory shine all around .
You see my thoughts aren't your thoughts
My ways aren't your ways.
Look up to the sky
My hands reach out
To comfort you in the middle of this storm.
I never leave you nor forsake you.

Cnoc Na Sidhe — An Extract by *Tony Bonner*

After the death of my wife I decided to roam
As too many memories lurked in me home.
Carrying all in a bag on my back
I headed up north, seeking untrodden tracks.
And up in the hills of bleak Wester Ross
Tried coming to terms with my anguish and loss.
Clouds falling towards me, thick mist below,
Wandering past patches of last winters snow.
I howled at the mountains, cursed through the straths
Let my feet wander, not caring the path.
Passed on my way a fallen place stone
Deep in a ditch, the colour of bone,
That read in curved script "Cnoc Na Sidhe"
The Gaelic of course, meant nothing to me.
I came upon ruins half buried in moss,
The only thing standing an old mercat cross,
And becoming aware I was losing the light
Decided to pitch up, and stay for the night.
Lighting a fire, I switched on my phone
Of course, no signal, I felt quite alone.
Mused on cruel Clearances, what must have been
Wished these stones could talk, tell what they'd seen.
Of course shadows can flicker, soft wind sound as voice,
Whispering and hissing round my bivouac of choice.
Still it made me uneasy, and without knowing why
I called my wife's name, and fell asleep as I cried.
Waking next morning, I mixed up a brew
Clinging like cobwebs, dreich haar blocked my view.
Looks like I'm stuck here, at least for today,
Might as well look around, make use of my stay.
There really wasn't much, some walls, a blocked well,
Near the mercat cross I stumbled and fell
Over heather hidden stones laid flat in a field.
Rattled, I scraped off the moss, and eventually revealed
"In memory of my lad", I swept weeds from the next:
"To my sweet lost lass" hair stood up on my neck.
The third "For my lost wife" also had more:
A crudely carved hill, cross on top, and a door.
And underneath the picture, a tear-anguished plea
"When the cross is broken, come back to me"
I'd had a Christian upbringing,, from deep inside my head.
I tried to recall the details of Christ's rising from the dead.
So not a door but open tomb, his cross upon the hill.



But why should the cross be broken? Again the creeping chill.
Shivering I rose, and made to go back to my tent
Pondering on the puzzle, wondering what it meant.
Not noticing from downhill, a strange ethereal glow
Filtering through the fog, reflected off the snow.
Birdsong fell silent, and mingling with the grey
A hooded figure seemed to float, and uttered one word "Stay."
Startled, I looked up, stammered "I'm just passing through.
If you're the local landowner, I've no quarrel with you".
"Tell me something traveller" trilled a melodious voice,
"I can take away your grief, just answer me your choice,
Will you stay inside our home, for one day and a year?
"This offer will be made just once, I wish to make this clear.
"If you take away my sorrow, will I forget my wife?
Forget all the memories of the best years of my life?
The joy, the love, the warmth, her smile, our togetherness?
Looking straight into my eyes, he simply answered "Yes".
"In time my grief would pass" I said, "and about the three before
After going into your hillside, when did they leave your door?
"Those three we took to save their lives, they live safe with the Sidhe
But because of the religious symbol, cannot be set free..
Because when the black robed men preached we were superstition
Denying our existence through fear, hate and suspicion
Used an iron cross to block the hill, sole exit from our land."
No Sidhe or mortal could emerge, so remain within our hands.
But time flows soft within our realm, they have but aged a year
And of their mate and father, they have no memory clear."
"So centuries have passed, I said, and a year is but a day.
All they knew of life before, has long since passed away?"
But if you pass into our halls, you could teach them truth
And you could have another wife, a flaxen comely youth,
And two sweet children, now fatherless, to complete your family
What say you traveller, will you accept this offer made today?
Let me sleep for one more night, I'll answer with the dawn.
The decision is not easy, there's much to mull upon.
I can't yet answer yes or no, for perhaps I'm only dreaming
Or griefs making me hallucinate, however real it's seeming.
"Your grief is strong emotion, and that's why I am here
Your love shone like a bright red flame, drawing the Sidhe near.
The past emotions in this village helped us to stay strong,
But when the factors cleared the land, our energy source was gone.
Without that fear and love and hate, the Sidhe have fallen weak,
We cannot touch the iron cross, and so your aid we seek.
But if you choose not to help, or say you don't believe
This village will be your final stop, you will never leave...

Are you hooked yet?
Read the rest of
Tony's epic
narrative poem over
on The Bugle Blog:
[https://
edinburghbugle.com/
2024/04/16/cnoc-na-
sidhe-hill-of-peace/](https://edinburghbugle.com/2024/04/16/cnoc-na-sidhe-hill-of-peace/)
Or scan the QR with
your phone...



*Bird Painting also
by Tone Bonner*

Gossip by Allan Buchan

Twisted words with no decline
Deceptive scandals, that are not mine
Poisonous tongues with no restraint
A graffiti of lies in pixel and paint

Elaborations become the accepted truth
Distorting the mouth to hide the rotten tooth
Gossips are like daggers in the back
There is no defence to this cowardly attack



The Battle Within by Rosalind Alexander, including photography above

I arose early, wandered in the height of a new adventure. I gazed deeply into the middle of a green grassy forest. The roots hid wild vibrant flowers. To my amazement nervous deer clung together like clouds heading for a storm. My curiosity got the better of me. I slowly took one step my movement caught their sympathetic eyes.

I wasn't sure if I should quickly take a picture - watch the magic. After a moment I decided to stand still. I felt a rush of warm air tingle down my spine, soothing away my fears. A strong sense of God's presence touched my inner most being. I heard a voice, "Be still I am here".

I stood there for hours - deep in thought. It reminded me that peace could still find me even though my life had ruptured in those dark moments of my life. I longed for restoration, peace, understanding, but my outward being was overwhelmed. At that moment I grew tired and hungry. The deer sensed I was hurting and surrounded me - protecting me.

They moved in closer shielding me as if I was their own. Suddenly a loud roar echoed far and wide, scattering the frightened deer back to a place beyond my vision. They fled one by one leaving me behind - alone and vulnerable. I stood there so scared, shaking and trembling with fear. Another roar sounded nearer now.

I looked to the sky it was a comforting bright orange and I breathed a sigh of relief. Would my predator now flee? I knew in my heart of hearts I wasn't any safer in the midst of tranquillity. My thoughts lingered in the cool of the night taking me safety home.

Douglas's Diary



Bumped into John Hartson, one of the Celtic players!

Christmas decorations were up in Edinburgh from Mid-October! These are from outside The Dome.



I was a team leader at the Moonwalk in September. I was on Zone 9!



I spent new year at eh Sol Pelicanos Ocas in Benidorm. This is a picture of me at the New Year Gala meal, and another of my last day abroad.

Happy New Year to all Bugle Readers!



The Bugle group meet most Wednesday afternoons. We meet for workshops, to write, to catch-up and to go for trips. If you or anyone you know would be interested in coming along or finding out more please email samrowe@bethanychristiantrust.com or call 07818893093. If you just have a piece of writing or art that you would like to submit please email bugle.edinburgh@gmail.com

