Radical Routes

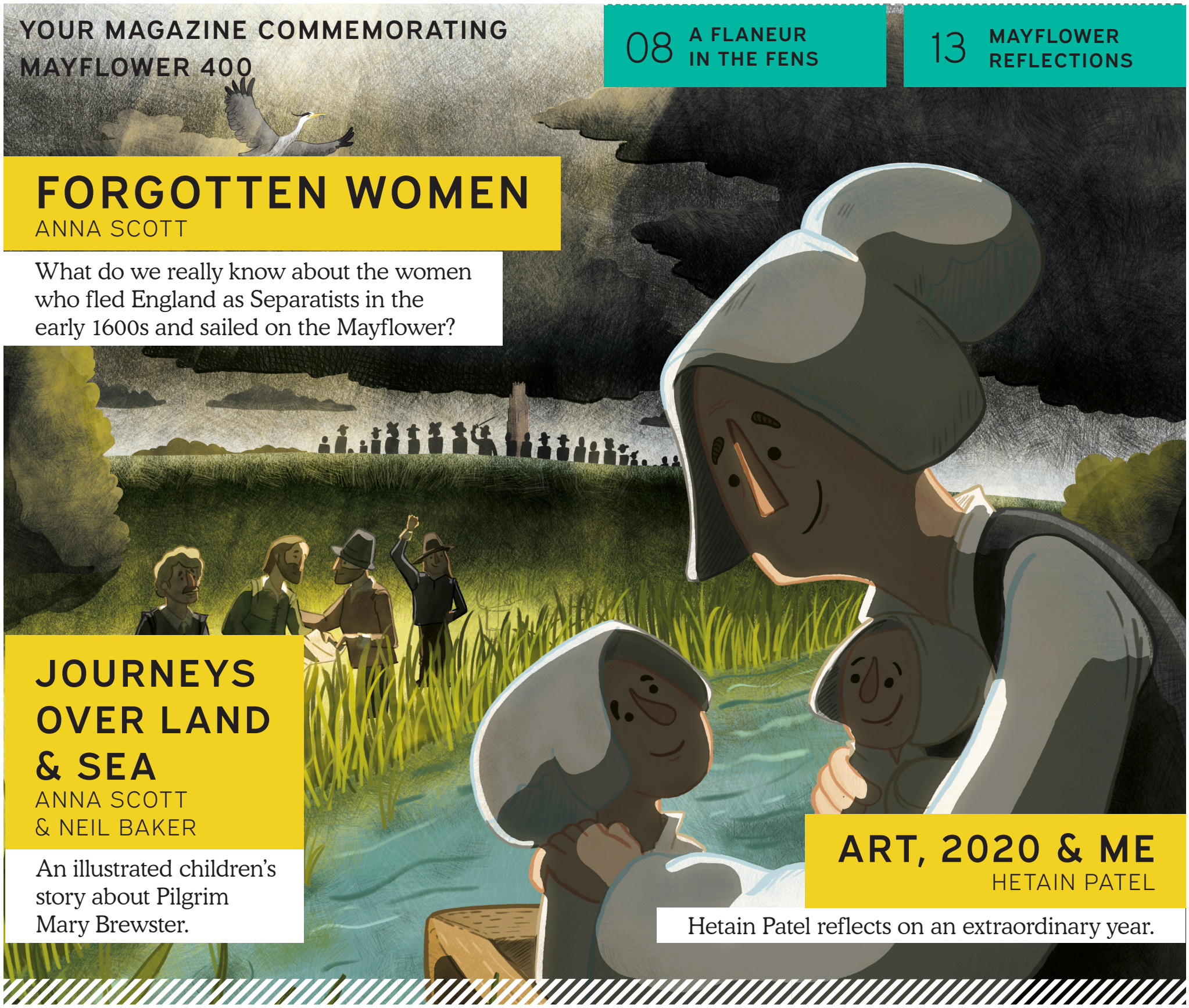
EDITION #2 AUTUMN

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FORGOTTEN WOMEN

ANNA SCOTT

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JOURNEYS OVER LAND & SEA

ANNA SCOTT & NEIL BAKER

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Standing still in Boston market & capturing the stories.

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EDITOR'S LETTER

Welcome to the second edition of Radical Routes the magazine.

Radical Routes has been commissioned by the community arts organisations at the heart of commemorating the history and legacy of the epic Mayflower journey. Transported engages people with arts activity across Boston and South Holland. West Lindsey District Council inspires residents to learn more about the Pilgrims through a variety of programmes, particularly at Gainsborough Old Hall where a group of separatists worshipped in secret. From the Few to the Many is marking Mayflower 400 with the people and places of Bassetlaw, where the story began. Together they reveal the deep connections parts of Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, and South Yorkshire have with world-changing history.

In the first edition we looked, in various ways, at 'journeys' and what they mean to people looking for safety, security, or freedom. Now we turn to other types of journey, personal ones of self-discovery, those we undertake in our minds, those made to remember, or those made for fun.

Our thoughts have been hugely affected by Covid-19, and by the social inequalities highlighted by the Black Lives Matter movement. They have made us question assumptions about communities and how they function. In a way this brings us back to the heart of the Pilgrim story – to belonging, or not belonging.

In this edition Anna Scott continues to challenge myths by revealing the role women played in establishing a Pilgrim community strong enough to survive. Paul Long reflects on the making of a 360-degree virtual reality film and asks why it is that some stories are told and others 'forgotten, brushed aside, never to be told again.'

Artists Chris Lewis-Jones, Hetain Patel, and Rachel Carter, talk about their work and how they are affected by senses of time and place in families and communities. Helen Ackroyd tells us about women literally knitting their community together. Sonya Hundal continues her lovely way of combining food and story with a trip to Boston Market for the delights of Boston Crab, vegetables from the Willoughby allotments, and samphire and cockles picked on long sea-marsh walks.

In a new feature you will also find links to click on to listen to new music; A Sure Refuge, written by former Gainsborough resident David Fawcett, and inspired by separatist leader William Bradford's diaries. With another few clicks you can also see new poetry performed by young people about the journey's they make.

Thank you for reading.

Henderson Mullin is the Chief Executive of Writing East Midlands. You can contact him for comments or queries at henderson@writingeastmidlands.co.uk

Find out more:

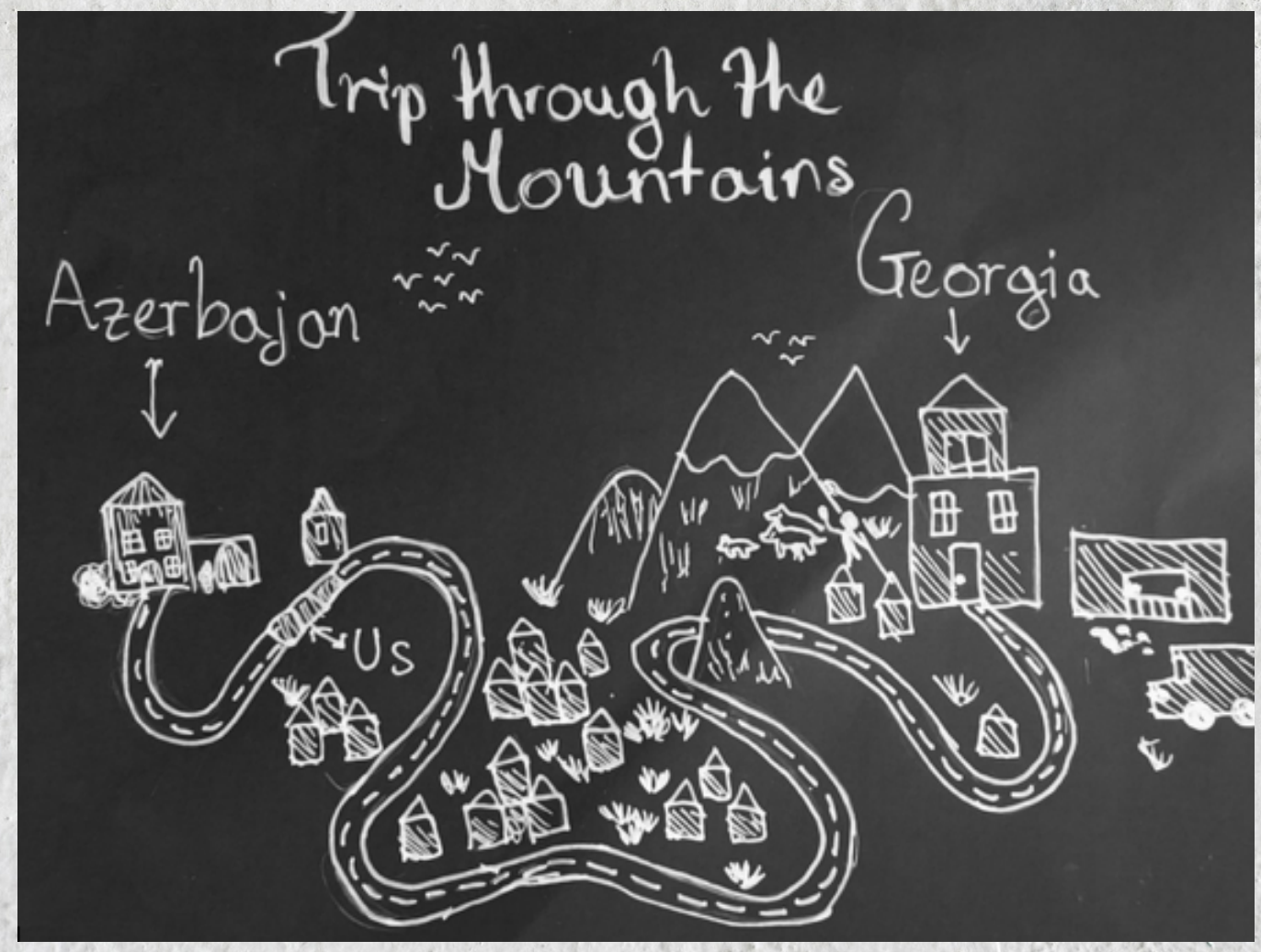
pilgrimroots.co.uk

transportedart.com

west-lindsey.gov.uk/my-council/council-news/mayflower-400-programme-sets-sail

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ARRIVALS... POEMS BY YOUNG PEOPLE



JOURNEY TO GEORGIA IN THE NIGHT

BY TERESA ULKAR MOSTALLINO, 10

We were heading to Georgia late, late in the night, looked out of the window and gasped at the sight. Glowing stars shimmered in the misty blue sky, we made wishes as shooting ones passed by.

There were sheep grazing on the meadow and trees way up high. There were lazy cows yawning who then laid down with a sigh. A warm breeze whistled through the tangles grass. The train's sides glimmered as dew collected on the brass.

Can you hear the cicadas hum and branches rustling in the moonlight, and the little dwarf owls which twit twoo through the night? A waft flows through the window - fresh mountain thyme. I'm aware of no one, its just me against all time.

We've arrived at the farm, I feel my thumping heart leap. Now I'm not nervous because these days will be a treat. We were heading to Georgia late, late in the night. No one stirring as all were asleep in the flickering light.

WATCH



What do we really know about the women who fled England as Separatists in the early 1600s and sailed on the Mayflower? We often know their names, and who they were related to or worked for. But it's much harder to know what they were thinking or feeling as very few women at that time had the chance to write these things down.

FORGOTTEN WOMEN

BY ANNA SCOTT

One of the reasons why the Pilgrims' story is so well-known is because the group's leading men wrote about it in diaries and letters. Apart from the odd mention, the women in their lives are barely visible. The other reason why we know more about some passengers than others is to do with whether they had descendants keen to research the lives of their ancestors. What can we say then about the others – the forgotten women in the Pilgrims' story? And what can their experience teach us about women's experience today?

Their roles were essential to the Pilgrim migration and this is also true for women who settle in other countries today. They may be less visible and have fewer freedoms than the men, yet their responsibilities are heavy, and they go unrecognised in circumstances where they are the glue holding it all together.

Women of the Mayflower

Women were clearly central to the functioning and survival of the early colony the Pilgrims' set up in America – with the help they received from Native Americans. The Pilgrims planned to create a sustainable colony able to pay off debts incurred in getting there while generating profits for financial backers in England.

Earlier colonies, like the one at Jamestown in Virginia, started off with only men and it was some years before women were shipped over; the vision for Plymouth was slightly different.

There were thirty women and girls on the voyage to America. Some of them from the community in Holland, and some sent by the London merchants who sponsored the venture. Two of them returned to Europe. Fifteen of them left descendants. Seventeen of them died in the first year in America.

One of these was Katherine Carver – the wife of the first colony Governor, born in the village of Sturton-le-Steeple in Nottinghamshire.

She had no known surviving children and died a few weeks after her husband John. Little else is known about this first lady of Plymouth, dismissed as "a weak woman" by chronicler and second colony Governor, William Bradford.

Wives & mothers, servants & daughters

It's fair to assume that the women who made the trip had to sacrifice a lot. Some of them were travelling because of their husbands' vocal rejections of the Church in England. They might have shared the same opinions, and the burdens this created as a consequence. They decided to leave homes and their work in England to flee a rising fear of intolerance and persecution, travelling with young children and what belongings they could carry.

They often had a rough time. The women were, according to Bradford's account, searched for money after the failed attempt to escape from Boston, rifled and ransacked, "further than became modesty".Later, as they tried to escape near Immingham, they endured more distress as they were separated from their husbands after being spotted by armed men on the shore. The men escaped while the women were left, in Bradford's words, "weeping & crying on every side, some for their husbands, that were carried away in the ship ... others not knowing what should become of them, & their little ones; others again melted in tears, seeing their poor little ones hanging about them, crying for fear, and quaking with cold." For women "must go with their husbands."

His evocative description of their fear and alarm, anxiety and sorrow, is something we might recognise today in accounts of migrants and asylum seekers. The trust involved in making secretive escapes is also very resonant with modern-day parallels, as Bradford recounts their initial betrayal, followed by separation and local authorities unwilling to take responsibility, who "were glad to be rid of them in the end upon any terms; for all were wearied & tired with them".

Pregnant... but no pause

Many of the colony's women travelled with their young children or while pregnant, and this was as risky as you might imagine. Mary Allerton's baby was stillborn as the ship lay off the coast of New Plymouth, and she died a couple of months later. Susanna White gave birth to son Peregrine once the ship arrived, and Elizabeth Hopkins' son Oceanus was born on board, although he didn't survive for long.

The voyage had originally been planned with two ships, but after they had to abandon one (which leaked), they were forced together with much less space. Remarkably, nearly all of them survived the voyage itself even if they were faced with a devastating first year and a harsh winter with a lack of food. By the following autumn, only four of the adult women had survived.

If you lost your husband, you didn't tend to stay unmarried for long, sometimes only a few weeks. This helped to sustain families, providing financial support and a structure, with women playing a central role as carers.

Suffrage & the Tercentenary

The ‘Pilgrim Mothers’ were recognised in the US particularly around the 300th anniversary of the voyage in 1920. Before that, the famous story had focused on the ‘Pilgrim Fathers’, neglecting to reference women’s contributions. As debate intensified around the rights of women to be able to vote, statues and artworks began to depict the national origin myth by foregrounding women’s roles.

Whilst this lent a certain equality to the representation of the American nation’s past, advocates effectively began to create a new stereotype around these women, as mothers, domesticated and pious, obedient and wholesome – as inspiring originators of the American dream.

Colonists, migrants

One of the most significant contrasts between the experiences of the Mayflower women and today’s migrants forced to escape their home countries by ship – or dinghy – goes back to the motivations for the voyage. The Pilgrims were colonists, intent on setting up their homes in a land which was already home to a diverse indigenous population. They knew this and saw it as a reason to go – they wanted to convert these people to Christianity and thought the land was not being used effectively.

What does resonate across the centuries is their flawed humanity. They may not have foreseen the consequences of their colonisation, dire as this was for indigenous communities. On the other hand, it is also possible to recognise a shared humanity – particularly in the experiences of the women involved, the suffering they endured and the long-term impact of dislocation and upheaval caused by the experience of becoming outcasts, outlaws, immigrants and colonists. Traces of their invisible, personal struggles exist to help us tell that story.

If you’re interested in finding out more about who the passengers on the Mayflower were and where they came from, you might like to explore Caleb Johnson’s Mayflower History Passenger List or American Ancestors’ Mayflower resources. You can read Bradford’s account of the Pilgrims’ lives in his diary Of Plimoth Plantation.

Anna Scott is a heritage consultant and public historian interested in how and why we use the past and lectures at Lincoln University. She is Programme Manager at Transported, a community-focused programme which aims to get more people in Boston Borough and South Holland enjoying and participating in arts, and she is Mayflower 400 Officer at West Lindsey District Council.

transportedart.com
Find out more about the Pilgrim Roots in Gainsborough.
discovergainsborough.com/pilgrim-roots









JOURNEYS OVER LAND & SEA

BY ANNA SCOTT & NEIL BAKER

An illustrated children's story about Pilgrim Mary Brewster



There are lots of story books out there about the voyage of the Mayflower, but it's not as easy to find a story that tells you about what happened before the Mayflower – and all the journeys that were involved to get to that point of departure, 400 years ago. Historian Anna Scott and illustrator Neil Baker have produced an illustrated story that does just that, putting the story of the Pilgrims' roots at the heart of a beautifully imagined pictorial tale.

The famous ship set sail in 1620 with 102 passengers, including a woman in her early 50s named Mary Brewster. Mary was from Nottinghamshire originally, and was one of the Separatists who fled the country in 1608 in fear for her safety along with her young family.

We don't know what Mary thought about this turn of events, we don't have her thoughts from a diary, we don't know if she was pleased to leave, apprehensive, scared or excited – but we do know the journeys she took, travelling by land and across the seas, with whom and when. That tells us a lot about what she must have endured all those years ago.

So many things happened to the Separatists that it makes for an exciting story with lots of unexpected twists. Anna Scott became fascinated particularly with what life must have been like for the women travelling at the time, especially when we can't know what they were thinking:

"Many of the Mayflower's passengers were women, some travelling with young children or as servants – what a journey that must have been! But even more interesting is finding out about all the journeys many of them had to make even before they boarded that ship. By focusing on one of those women, Mary, we've been able to tell a story of faith, perseverance and what must have been, at times, massive personal sacrifice. Neil's illustrations capture the essence of these themes and make it really accessible as a visual narrative – his pictures really are worth a thousand words."





From Neil's perspective, "When illustrating Journeys Over Land & Sea I was particularly concerned with the distances they travelled and the landscapes they passed through. I wanted the environments and the atmosphere of these locations to help carry some of the emotion Mary and her family might be feeling. The changing scenery I hope emphasises the enormity of their sacrifice and determination in the hope of realising a better life."

To find out more about the book and how to obtain a copy visit the Discover Gainsborough website at discovergainsborough.com.





A FLANEUR IN THE FENS

BY CHRIS LEWIS-JONES

The sandstone bluff on which Nottingham Castle stands marks the geological divide between upland and lowland Britain. I know therefore that the land will gradually flatten before me as I drive east, especially once I pass Grantham. I am an artist and a flaneur, a hopeful traveller, and I'm heading to The Wash in order to facilitate a series of art-walks with members of the public. Participants will use frottage drawing techniques to explore and record the surfaces and textures of the towns and villages of The Fens, starting with Boston.

I turn off the A17 and follow the South Forty Foot Drain for several miles. I cross the North Forty Foot Drain. As I approach Boston, I cross the Witham and enter the historic Market Place (the largest in England). To the east of the Market place, the old town is defined by the West Fen Drain, which, like the South Forty Foot Drain and the Witham, flows into the Haven, the narrow tidal channel that links Boston to the sea.

Boston was bound to its hinterland and to Sleaford, Lincoln, the Baltic, the Hanseatic ports, the Netherlands and New England, by a network of 'wet routes'. Travelling to or from Boston meant doing so by water. Following the demise of the Hanseatic League and the decline of both fishing and maritime freight, Boston no longer needed to maintain the active engagement with water that once characterised its daily life. However, signs of its maritime heritage can still be seen in the physical fabric of the town. Customs House, Pescod Hall, the docks, the drains, the iron buoys that litter the banks of the Haven, the plaques at Scotia Creek and St Botolph's, speak to us in the voices of merchants, sailors, fishermen, bargees, settlers and pilgrims. And many of these locations provide easily frotted and visually arresting textures and texts.

Drawing as performance, on a fine day, in a bustling marketplace, always attracts a crowd and conversations always interesting. Although I undertake research beforehand, into the locations in which I work, I learn most from the chats that happen on the street, as people share their knowledge of local history, geography, farming, industry, fishing and salacious gossip. I do my best to engage people as I work and, once involved in a practical art activity, their conversation flows naturally. Often the flow becomes a torrent, infused with expletives, as happened in Boston, whenever certain topics, such as: 'Boris', 'Covid' or 'Brexit', cropped up. However, I do find that debates, about charged topics, became less intense, when discussed whilst drawing.

On 5th September, I was documenting an activity with my colleague Laura Hudson, when we attracted the attention of three young Latvians. Ugis, Rodions and Henriks were intrigued by our costumes (we wore matching brown coats and caps) and rolls of paper. I explained what we were doing, and they asked if they could join in. As soon as I handed out the paper and graphite, they were off! Each heading in a different direction, competing to find the most interesting surfaces to frott.

Laura and I talked to the young men about their chosen surfaces and the stories these suggested. Henriks was drawn to the Crucifix that stands in the grounds of St Botolph's Church. Was he devout? Was he Orthodox? Catholic? Or perhaps just interested in beautiful timber? I didn't get to find out about his religious beliefs, but we did discuss the timber. I agreed with Henriks that an expert would be able to tell instantly if it was oak (we both felt it to be Oak). I wanted to ask Henriks how he felt about the symbolism of the cross, from his own cultural perspective, but, as I had known him for less than an hour, it didn't feel appropriate. The important thing, in situations such as this, is to engage participants rather than ask questions which may seem invasive. However, I find participants are often eager to discuss 'big issues' as they work. Henriks made me wonder what John Cotton would have made of the cross. Cotton was the puritan Minister at St Botolph's, and then the Hudson Bay Company (he was one of the founders of Boston Massachusetts). I doubt he would have approved of a life-size crucifix standing in the grounds of a protestant church. I am not even sure how I, a post-protestant atheist, feel about the symbolism of this crucifix, or any other!

Whilst Henriks was frotting the grain of the crucifix, Ugis was examining the signage on a litter bin in Ingram Square. With their distinctive lettering, spelling just one word: 'LITTER', these municipal bins are popular with first-time frotteurs. Stroking a stick of graphite across a thin sheet of paper stretched over a sharply defined void, such as that made by a letter, laser-cut from steel, is instantly gratifying. The texture is revealed within seconds, the letter remains white. The effect is dramatic.



After frotting his litter bin, Ugis moved to the gravestones and historical plaques in the near-by churchyard. There are several plaques dedicated to the memory of pilgrims and others, who left Boston for the New World in the 1620s and 30s. He was impressed by the number of Bostonians who made that journey (a third of its population); and now appreciated why ‘Boston, Massachusetts’ was so called.

Rodions was fascinated by the carved graffiti he discovered on the walls of the church, several examples of which he frotted. We talked about the care taken by artists and artisans, in the days before felt markers and aerosol cans, and how carved scripts with serifs indicated a pre 20th Century date. We also discussed the extent to which the common folk of this world were just as much part of its history as its kings. Because of their skill with a knife, their voices can still be heard today. We wondered how many of the pilgrims had carved their names or initials into the limestone or timber framed walls of 17th Century Boston.

I could not help but ruminate, as we talked, on the routes taken by these young Latvians today. Travelling from Riga to Boston. Two Hansa ports. Two communities that would have exchanged goods, services and much more, in the Middle Ages. Did Ugis, Rodions and Henricks know about these links? I shouldn’t be at all surprised! Did the native-Bostonians, who voted to leave Europe in 2016, know that the status their town enjoyed in the past was as a direct consequence of its trade with Poles, Latvians, and Estonians?

Boston’s physical and cultural roots run deep. For hundreds of years it was an outward facing town. It had to be to survive. Given that 15% of its current population was born in Eastern Europe, it still is. Six hundred years ago merchants from Boston sailed regularly to the Hanseatic ports. And merchants from Riga, Limberg and Tallin sailed to Boston. Four hundred years ago pilgrims sailed from Boston, first to Holland, then to North America. Nowadays migrants from Eastern Europe bring their entrepreneurial energy to the town, helping to keep it buoyant during austerity and fed during lock-down.

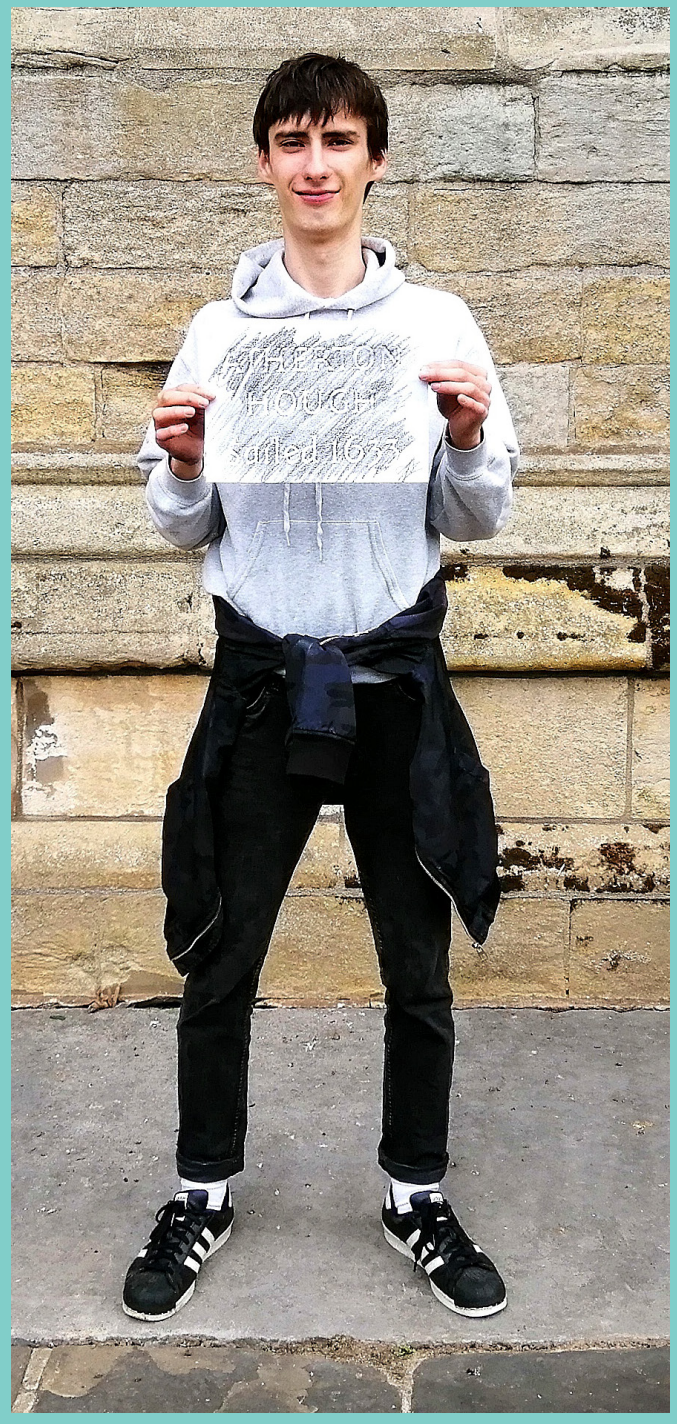
I'm excited by the idea of these 'routes to roots', exploring the ways in which communities are held together by networks. The more we reveal these networks, the more we appreciate the extent to which we are linked. Art, especially art-on-the- street, is a great way of making these routes, roots and networks visible, tangible and relevant.

I feel I’ve only just begun to scratch (or rather ‘frott’) the surface of this multifaceted town. In this case, graphite, was my key, but there are many more creative keys to be tried, and many more creative conversations to be had.



> *“I am an artist and a flaneur, a hopeful traveller*



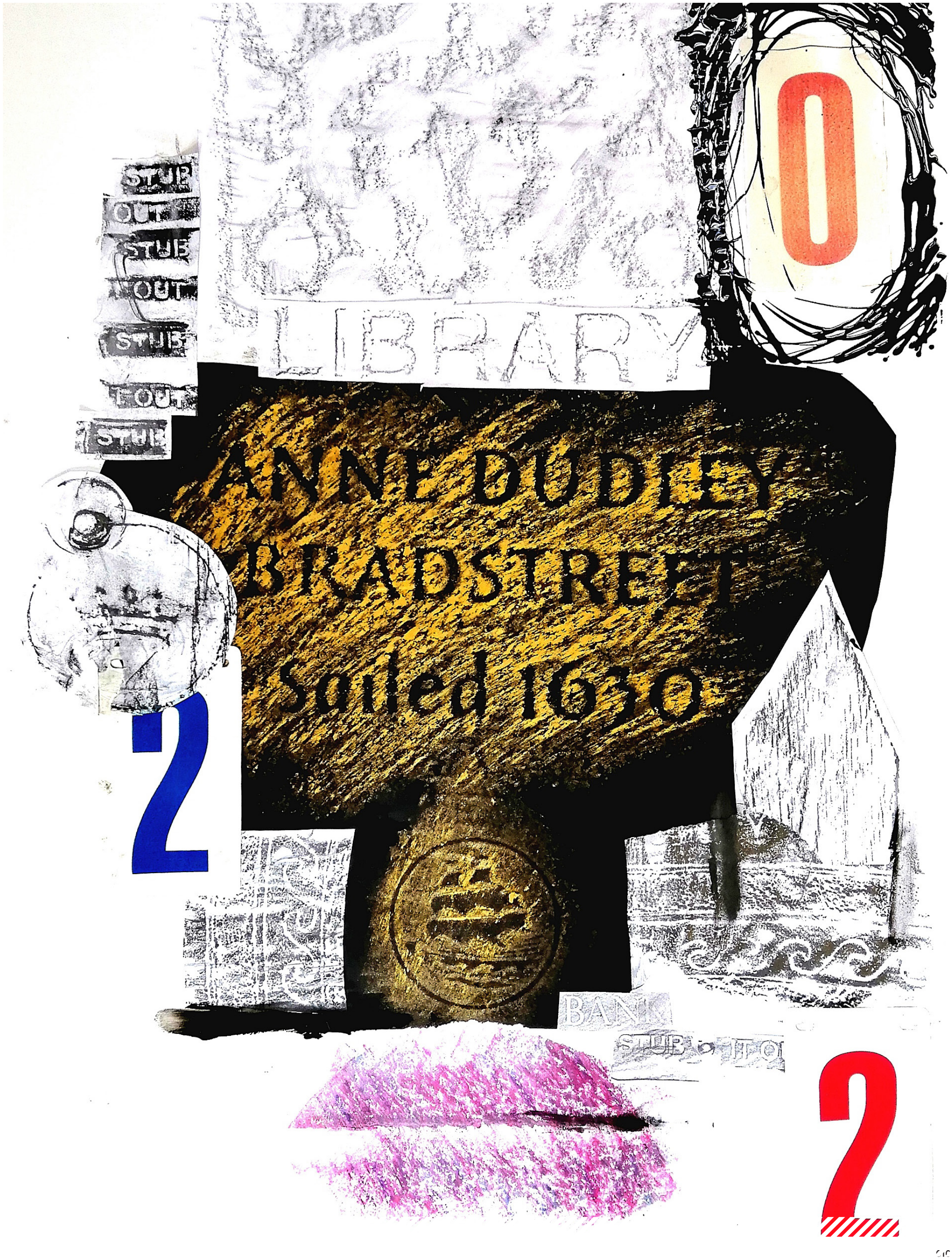




Chris Lewis-Jones is a fine artist, educator, performer and lecturer based at Primary, one of the most exciting artist-run spaces in the UK.

He is an Associate Artist at Nottingham Contemporary, specializing in working with people with dementia, a Lead Tutor in Craft Art & Design for the WEA across the East Midlands, a visiting lecturer at various universities, co-artistic director of Dog's Daughter, and Artistic Director of Nu-Urban Gardeners, a live art and creative landscape project, also based at Primary.

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Hetain Patel is the artist working on the major arts commission commemorating Mayflower in the region where some of the Pilgrims originated. Working with curator and artist Kate Stoddart & Jo Wheeler, his vision will explore some of the complex themes of the Mayflower story and how they resonate in 2020.

ART, 2020 & ME

HETAIN PATEL REFLECTS ON AN EXTRAORDINARY YEAR

We talked to him about how this crazy year has affected his art, and communities.

Tell us about yourself - who you are, your background, how you connect with the world

I'm a visual artist and filmmaker now based in London. I arrived there after 10 years in Nottingham, where I went to art school. Before that I was born and raised on the outskirts of Bolton. Now my accent goes with the flow – it becomes more Northern the closer I get to my parents' place.

And how does your art fit in?

My artwork is often about identity, which is informed by my being a second-generation immigrant of Indian parents. Where I grew up there were virtually no other people of colour, particularly at school. There was also a lot of heavy racism around in the early 80's.

I would say my artwork began as a place to process all of this, and to see where or how I fit into the world. I've been an artist for 17 years now, and I make work across a range of media including film, sculpture, photography, and live performance, usually for galleries, theatres and online. Thankfully this work has taken me to many places around the world which has enriched my life no end.

How did you find out that you were an artist? Or when did you decide to 'become' one?

I was always the best in the class at drawing. I loved doing it and it made me feel special so I kept it up through my school days though without ever imagining it could be a career. Being an artist at that time was like wanting to be a Jedi! I wasn't even sure what an artist was. That was until I was 18 when I chose to do an art foundation course after my A-Levels, and then a degree in Fine Art Nottingham, by following my instinct. I did very well academically so I'll be forever grateful to my parents for supporting this choice rather than insist that I do medicine, or law.

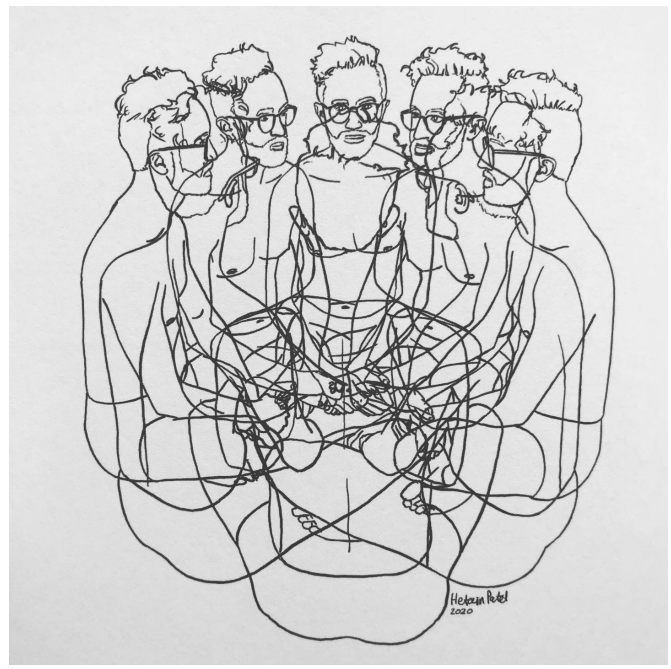
Towards the end of my degree I remember another student asking what I was going to do after graduation. I hadn't considered anything other than continuing my art practice. It was a place I could think and process things uniquely, and I couldn't imagine giving that up.

Is your work informed by ideas of 'community'? Are they warm friendly places or do you have a sense that the feelings around the word might be changing?

I feel like I've always been a loner. I come from a large family, but I didn't fully appreciate the incredible beauty and privilege of this until after I had gone away to University. Following a childhood of wishing I was white, and being ashamed of my Indian heritage, I felt fraudulent within all the communities I was a part of.

My practice is, in part, a process of ridding myself of this shame, and finding ways to take ownership of my heritage and identity, which British society told me was lesser. Now I feel deeply grateful for my heritage, and the characteristics that run through my family — hard work, manual labour, achieving what you are told is not possible. The more I achieve in my life and work, the more I become aware of this deep influence.

As a kid, community seemed to be about geography, the people that lived in your local area, and so it was never really attributed to having a singular characteristic of good or bad, and there was no choice around it. But since the dawn of the internet and easier travel, things have changed. The idea of community has become more malleable, something you can choose, in theory being part of multiple communities. But with this also comes the possibility of being excluded from more communities. My work explores the benefit of being influenced by multiple communities whilst being free from their specificity or exclusivity.



Has your sense of yourself been changed by Covid, or Black Lives Matters, or Brexit - the defining issues of these times?

I find that difficult to answer as it all still feels so fresh. I think since Brexit, and Trump, happened in 2016 my cynical side pops up more. It has left me feeling that I can't be surprised, by the immense power that a few middle-aged white men hold over the global population.

In terms of Black Lives Matters, I think we were all surprised by the momentum of the movement beyond the black squares on Instagram. But instead of feeling elation that change might happen, I found it re-traumatising to see what felt like hypocrisy flooding social media.

At the time the feeling left me incapable of thinking about other people, let alone the specificity of the black experience. The activity online vividly brought back the experiences from my childhood that I didn't realise were still there — the racially motivated humiliations that had undermined my self-worth as a child and that I had internalised as my fault. It felt like these newly 'woke' people, some friends and colleagues, were effectively admitting that they had witnessed, condoned and wilfully denied my being abused. I know this is not an uncommon experience for people of colour.

Having said this, I learned early on that it wasn't useful for me to focus on these experiences in my artwork. Instead the way that felt like healing for me was by taking an alchemical approach — turning shit into gold. And whilst I've been reacquainted with my anger during these past months, I still deep down believe in the revolutionary act of transformation, and that is a particular strength in how I think and work. In this way, I don't think my artistic self will change, but it reaffirms that it is work that still sorely needs doing.

I've also found it useful to remind myself that my work has always been anti-racist, anti-prejudiced. Initially about myself, but then by collaborating with other marginalised people, whether they were focused on disability, gender, race and so on. In order to function again, I've needed to remind myself that those of us who have fought the good fight will continue to do so.

Can you say what you are doing as an artist commissioned in the Mayflower commemoration projects how your work will this involve communities?

The original idea for my commission is to work with young and other locally based people in Bassetlaw and the wider region. I want to create a short film work that feels Hollywood and epic but is entirely made up of a cast of 50 people.

The idea was to consider how many millions of people chart their ancestry back to a very few people from Bassetlaw due to the original voyage of the Mayflower. I was interested in their desire to be free of the rules of how to worship, and how to live, in England. I was also thinking about how history remembers the explorers but not the people that are left behind.

To avoid 'celebrating' the colonialism of the Mayflower story, I wanted to instead celebrate the people remaining in Bassetlaw, particularly fast forwarding 400 years to now when in addition to descendants of the original inhabitants of the area, the East Midlands has a rich diversity of people from immigration that has happened without colonisation.

However, I am now rethinking the message of the projected work and asking myself whether it is direct enough. Part of me is wondering whether we could act more in the spirit of solidarity with the native people of America, particularly the Wampanoag people, whose story continues to be greatly minimised to this day.

I find myself checking in with my responsibility as an artist with a voice. I know I'm still super keen to work with the local people of Bassetlaw and the wider region, I just need to be clearer about the message and be open to the changes this might suggest for the project.

Can you find the positives in a pretty negative world at the moment?

Deep down I am an optimistic person. I experience waves of sadness and anger and go through bouts of pessimism, but I always return to my own power. I am grateful that I have influence and I take this responsibly seriously. I'm also lucky to meet people that I am inspired by, not just artists' but all kinds of people that exude kindness, love and compassion. This is infectious and I believe in the contagious nature of this, it leaves me hopeful that humanity can be good and that we all have a part to play in this. I think we are equipped differently and need to find our own ways to take action. I make artworks that create visions of marginalised people have not been seen before — for us to see ourselves in a new light, and for these visions to take space in our most influential institutions — museums, Hollywood, and YouTube.

Working with partners, he will be making a short film, on location in Bassetlaw, with a cast and representation of people from both sides of the Atlantic. Hetain was selected by a group of 10 young people and their tutors from the Inspire Learning Course 18/19.

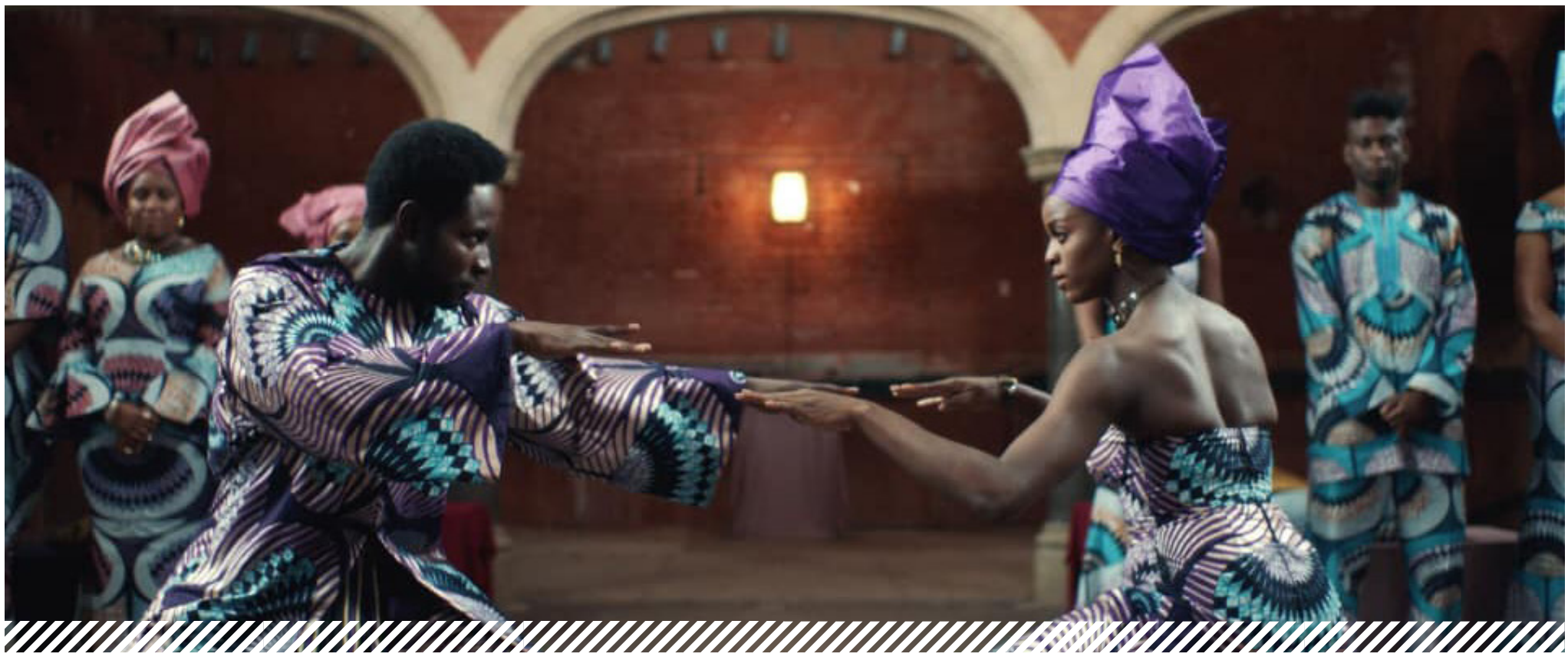
See the film of their journey here.

Hetain won the Film London Derek Jarman Award in 2019 and is exhibiting in the British Art Show 9, in 2021. hetainpatel.com

The Few to the Many is an arts project in development to mark the story of the Mayflower journey from 1620 - 2021, through a major commission with the people and places of Bassetlaw, where the story started. We are now proud to say we are working with our partners, Inspire: Culture, Learning & Libraries, Nottinghamshire County Council & Bassetlaw District through community engagement, young people, arts, learning and public programme including the Big Draw.







MAYFLOWER REFLECTIONS

BY PAUL LONG

There is something refreshing about being asked to write an article that reflects on a piece of recently completed work. As a creative person, I rarely find the time to deconstruct my own creative process, or look back at the myriad of decisions that have affected the final piece.

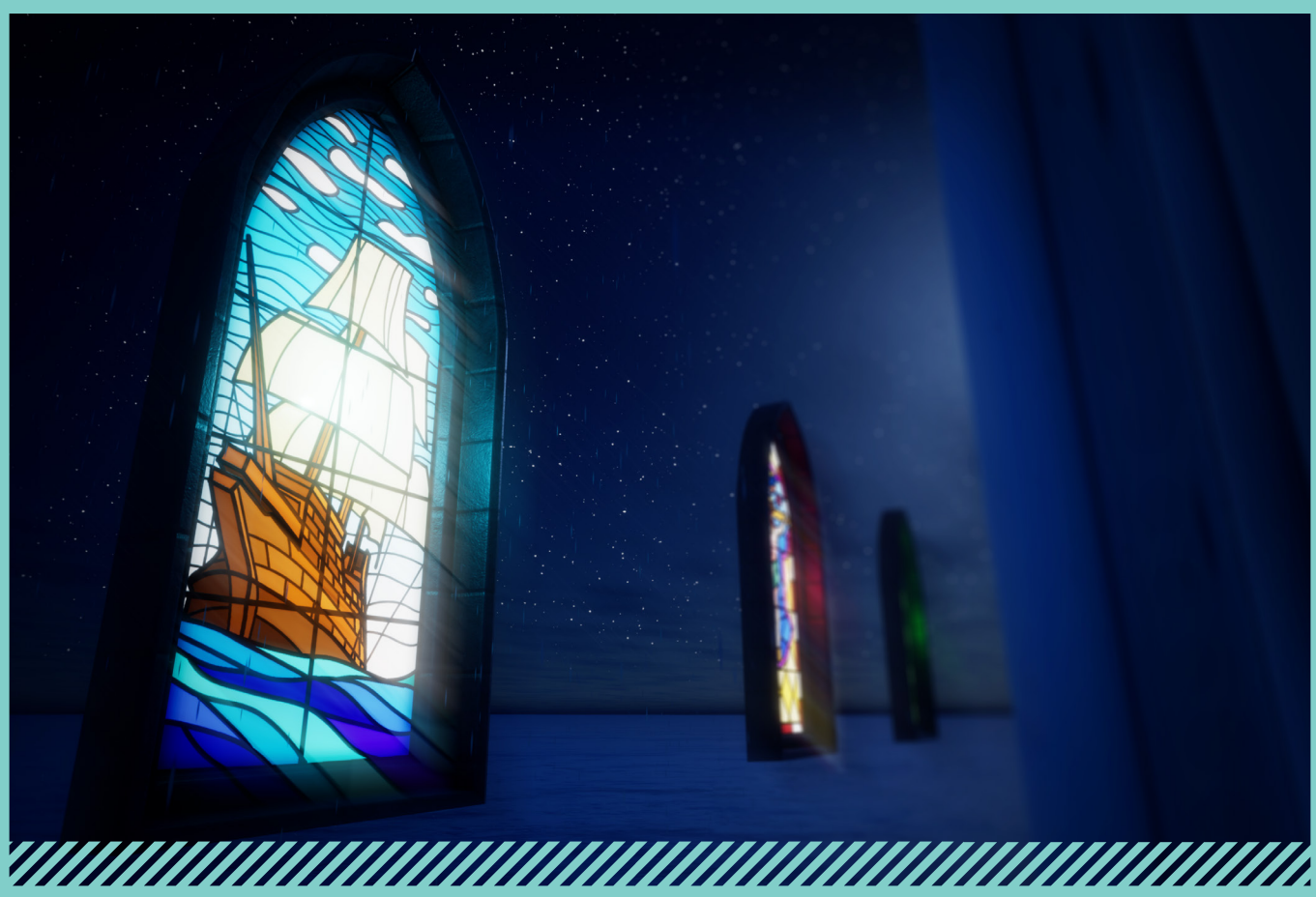


In many ways, making creative work is very much like the Mayflower sailing itself — there is a clear plan in place, a course is charted, timescales set and, as a team, we begin to work towards our collective goal. However, like the Mayflower story, there are so many unexpected delays, detours and consequences we could not possibly plan for. This can too easily be considered a flaw with the original plan, but in my experience, it is the change, the successes and the failures that we never anticipated that define and enrich the final story.

For me, this is exactly why I am fascinated by history. During our own journey, we have very little hope of knowing the outcomes (even if we convince ourselves otherwise). However, when we look back through the lens of history it is usually the case that these journeys have been taken before. We can see it all unfold. We can understand what happened, why it happened, and see the consequences. It is these parallels that mean history can help us to create a better version of ourselves and our society today and for the future. And so, it is with Mayflower Reflections.

Living in a world that is so visibly divided, it is not difficult to see why we were drawn to the Mayflower story. It is as relevant today as it has ever been. The story of people embarking on a journey that is so extreme and dangerous, in search of a better life, is one that we see in the news on an almost daily basis. For me, finding that relatable connection to our own lifetime is the key to connecting our audiences with history. So rather than heading straight for the history books, the early part of our creative process is very often about simply listening to each other's perspective of what is happening in our world right now. In the case of the Mayflower, this encompasses far reaching discussions on migration and persecution, as well as the pros and cons of the democracy that was born from the voyage. As is so often the case, it is almost impossible to separate the different strands of the story.

With the broad pen strokes of historical storytelling we see a small group of oppressed individuals fleeing for their lives. In a few short chapters we consider the experience of the Wampanoag, and realise that the oppressed have taken on the role of the oppressor.



Fast forward 400 years and the ‘free world’ that was born of this turmoil is openly suppressing the kind of migration that it was born from. And that is before we even begin to consider the issues of inequality that are still part of our present narrative. Yet, these broad pen strokes, as insightful as they are, do not always take account of the fact that all this change comes from people. History can all too easily be about statistics or broad social shifts, but in reality this was a voyage taken by a small group of people who were not planning 400 years in the future, they simply wanted a better way to live, and that is something we can all relate to. It is this personal journey that we want to connect with through Mayflower reflections.

There is a phrase that repeats throughout Mayflower Reflections that is my touch point to understand the story we tell.

Within the film, the reflection of light is explored both literally and metaphorically. Whether it be the vivid colours of the stained-glass windows rippling across the ocean’s surface, or the light that washes over the plantation as the Wampanoag are introduced. We constantly use light to change ambience. Light, like music, can instantly impact mood and tone. But the reflections are also words, phrases and themes that bounce throughout the piece, and throughout the periods of time it represents. Mayflower Reflections is not a 400-year-old story with a neat ending, but rather it is a story that lives on, despite being 400 years old.

I could write endlessly about the stages of the creative process, or the themes that have affected the whole team as we worked on the project, but we spent months distilling our thought into the most powerful and concise 15 minutes we could imagine. So, I encourage you to type in the link in the introduction, put on some headphones and spend a little bit of time reflecting, on our reflections, on this 400-year journey.

> *“So why then, when, history is littered with the same actions, Do some stories spill like refractions, Of the same light reflected through generations,While others are forgotten, brushed aside, never to be told again.*







Paul Long is the Creative Director of arts organisation Metro Boulot Dodo. In July, MBD released an immersive 360 degree film, Mayflower reflections, that can be viewed here.

WATCH

CANTATA: A SURE REFUGE

BY DAVID FAWCETT

As a very young child I loved to sing, and by the age of 7 I was having piano lessons and had joined a church choir in my hometown of Radcliffe, Lancashire. But it was when my family moved to Gainsborough when I was 9 that my musical education began in earnest. I joined the then large choir of men and boys at All Saints Parish Church, eventually becoming Head Chorister. My choirmaster for almost most of that period, Philip Ainsworth, also became my music teacher at Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, and subsequently taught me to play the organ.

Since then I've continued to be heavily involved in music-making, as an organist and choir director eventually being able to build a career in music composing, amongst other things, regularly for the choirs with which I was working. Among them was Gainsborough Choral Society, with which I had sung as a teenager and whose annual 'Carols for All' I had continued to accompany on the organ for around 16 years, long after I had left Gainsborough. So, I was delighted when last year I was asked to write a substantial new work especially for Gainsborough Choral Society, to mark the 400th anniversary of the sailing of the Mayflower.

My first challenge in creating this 50-minute work was to devise a structure, by assembling texts which could be set to music. I turned to two main sources – William Bradford's account, and the Book of Psalms in the Old Testament.

It was clear from Bradford that the Psalms played a central role in the expression of the Separatists' faith and life, and I knew the Psalms well (from my time as a chorister at Gainsborough Parish Church) as a rich collection of prayers, teaching and commentary on the human condition. I selected text from many Psalms, to illustrate different aspects of the Separatists' beliefs, life and history – including their life of prayer, how they were persecuted, their experience as refugees, the storms they endured at sea, their sense of deliverance – to create a structure of choral movements, adding drama to the interspersed recitative narratives which drew on Bradford's writing.

I was keen that my cantata should not simply relate a historical event but should tell a story with significance for our own time. Examples of persecution, displacement, flight, alienation and refuge are never far from our daily news, and my work seeks to relate the Separatists' experience, and our response to it, to what is happening all over the world today, including on our own shores.

The variety of the text selected from the Psalms' has allowed me to create piece of musical contrasts between the various choral movements – the calm meditation of Song of prayerfulness, the sense of violent pursuit in the Song of persecution, the unsettled wandering through unfamiliar places in the Song of alienation, the violent storm of the Song of perseverance, and so on. In telling the story, therefore, I hope I have created a work which has musical direction and integrity in itself – making its own journey through faith and adversity to deliverance and thanksgiving.

Although the first performance of the work has had to be delayed because of COVID-19 restrictions, by the wonders of technology it is possible to sample movements 'performed' digitally by synthesised orchestra and singers.

1. Overture

The instrumental Overture introduces themes from three of the subsequent choral movements. The first, a rising 'call' for solo horn, is used throughout the work, as a key theme in the second movement ('A song of prayerfulness') but also appearing in several others, as a motif signifying the Separatists offering up prayer to God. The other themes used in the Overture are the 'meditation' theme also from movement 2, the solo melody from 'Upon our way' (movement 10) and the 'refuge' theme from the 'A song of persecution' (movement 6).

LISTEN



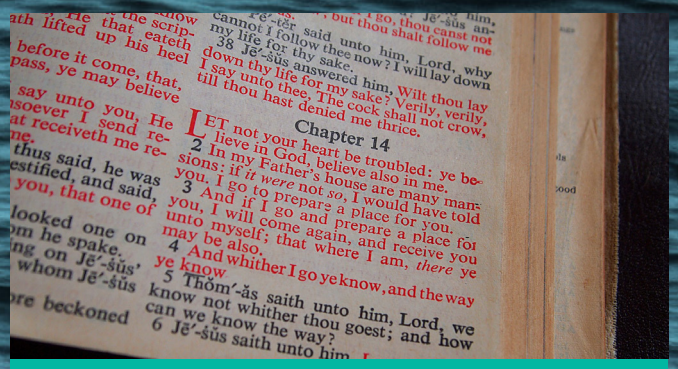
2. A song of prayerfulness

This movement sets up the story of the Separatists' life of prayerful dedication. The text beginning 'Ponder my words, O Lord: consider my meditation' is selected from Psalm 5. The movement employs the horn 'prayer' motif as well as a gently undulating figure in the violins signifying 'meditation'.

LISTEN

3. Recitative – the Separatists

The first of the recitative movements – solo narratives sparsely accompanied only by piano, which provide structure for the work – introduces the story of the 17th century religious Separatists in and around Gainsborough, who, in the words of William Bradford, 'lived together as a body, in a most strict and sacred bond and covenant of the Lord'.



4. A song of faithfulness

This gently flowing movement uses words from several psalms to portray the Separatists as living a life apart, dedicated to God: 'Blessed are they that have not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners'. The chorus is joined by the mezzo soprano soloist in a more lively and joyful middle section, then returning to the opening melody in looking forward to the eventual success of the Separatists' quest.

5. Recitative – the Separatists are persecuted

Telling how a new law effectively outlawed the Separatist movement, this brief recitative leads into…

6. A song of persecution

In this movement, I employ a musical technique drawn from early music – the 'chase', where one part follows and echoes another at close quarters – to give a sense of the Separatists being forced to scatter as they are violently harried: 'Lord, how are they increased that trouble me: many are they that rise against me, without any offence or fault of me, O Lord.' The voice parts are stalked by strident figures in the strings, representing the unbending authority of those who pursue them.

LISTEN

7. Recitative – the flight to Holland

The tenor soloist sets the scene for the Separatists' escape to Holland, drawing parallels with the harsh treatment of 'migrants and refugees of all ages', which of course includes our own.



8. A song of alienation

I marked this movement for chorus and tenor soloist 'unsettled', and I meant the music to feel unsettling, picking its way through an unfamiliar land of shifting emphasis, harmonic uncertainty and alien-sounding, wandering melodies. The chorus call to God from a 'strange and far-off land where no comfort is.' Three solo strings act as distantly received morse code 'SOS' signals, recalling the dangers which thousands of migrants today face daily on the Mediterranean or in the English Channel.

LISTEN

9. Recitative – the Separatists leave Holland

The relatively peaceful years of exile in Holland are remembered briefly by the tenor soloist, before he relates that the prospect of being caught up in European religious wars prompted the Separatists to seek sanctuary further off yet, in the New World.



10. 'Upon our way'

I have imagined the Separatists invoking the blessing and guidance of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit as they prepare for the perilous journey to America. The soloist sings the tune which we first heard in the Overture, and then when the choir take up this tune, the soloist elaborates above it, while the three horns return with their 'prayer' motif, as if to carry the invocations of the Separatists heavenward.

LISTEN

11. Recitative – voyage to America

The Separatists begin their journey, by way of Southampton and Plymouth, where they are forced to abandon their own leaking ship and join the rest of their company upon Mayflower and set sail for America. In the words of William Bradford, they 'were met with many fierce storms and high seas. We committed ourselves to the will of God, and resolved to continue, though the ship was sorely shaken and cracked.'

12. A song of perseverance

I wrote this movement to represent in music the horrors of a storm at sea. The violent, irregular motion of high seas is reflected in the thunderous timpani, blazing horns, harmonic clashes and changing metre, and the disjointed interjections of the chorus as they seem to be thrown up and down by the waves. They cry for God to save them, 'for the waters have come in even unto my soul'.

LISTEN

13. Recitative – New England

This short introduction to the final three movements imagines the arrival into the harbour of Cape Code, with the travellers wondering what kind of 'New England' they would create. They agree the 'Mayflower Compact', the basis of the laws by which the new colony they eventually found will be governed, based upon 'just and equal laws'.



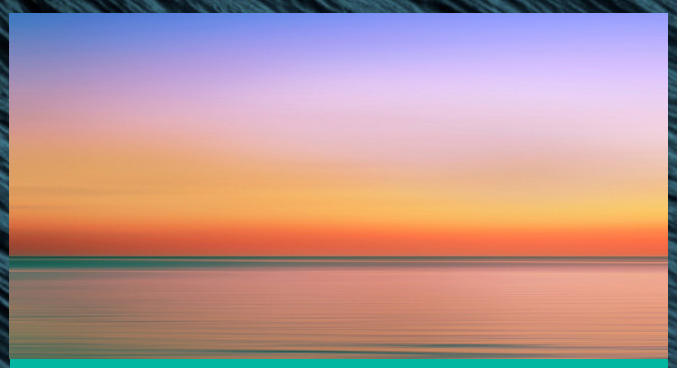
14. Journey's end

This is a setting of a poem by Colin Walker, taken from a sequence of poems he wrote on the Separatists' story. It draws parallels with biblical stories – of the leading of the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt, and of the resurrected Christ lighting a fire ashore to welcome his disciples from a night on the Sea of Galilee. Like them, the Separatists are now 'at rest, safe anchored and free!'. The words of the Mayflower Compact are heard again, as the new settlers express the hope: 'May peace unfettered here for aye be found.'



15. A song of deliverance

The opening of this movement is meant to convey the wonder with which the newly arrived travellers might have viewed the prospect, physical and social, of their new world. Two solo strings play an interleaved, imitative and seemingly untethered melody over a firmly grounded soft timpani roll. Over a return of fragments of the opening string duet, the baritone soloist enters, as William Bradford, to sing verses from a poem attributed to him.



16. A song of thanksgiving

With words selected from Psalm 136, with the constant refrain 'O praise ye the Lord, for he is good: and his mercies endure for ever', the chorus give thanks for their deliverance and safe arrival. The three soloists join in turn to elaborate the chorus parts and finally join the chorus as the shouts of thanksgiving become stronger and bring the cantata to a joyful close.

LISTEN

David Fawcett is a classical composer and professional musician. He writes sacred and secular choral music for a range of types of choir, from small church choirs of limited resources, through to experienced chamber choirs, large choral societies and professional ensembles. Most of his existing output is sacred choral music, with secular works being added to the catalogue.

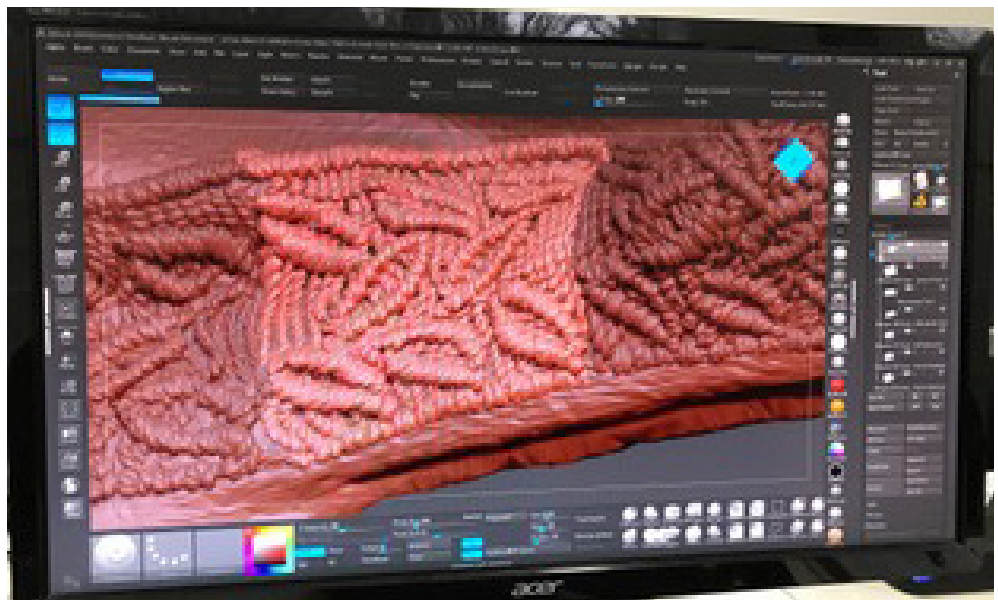
davidfawcettcomposer.com

WEAVING OUR HISTORY

BY RACHEL CARTER

We all have family stories, and these were one of the main sources of conversation amongst the one hundred or so women engaged in weaving their history. They were from areas which were once home to many of the Pilgrims and were learning a new craft, macramé over a four week period.











At each session boards were laid out, rolls of lovely coloured cotton cords, scissors, pins and patterns, along with the samples of macramé panels I'd share with the group.

Many of the women did not know each other, some came in pairs of mothers and daughters, others from community groups like the Women's Institute. As the weaving began and people relaxed, I told stories of my travels to America on a freight ship to explore Harvard University and Provincetown, visiting sites that were important to the Pilgrim story. That trip brought up memories of my own family history, and connections to this area.

I told them about a trip to Whitby with my father, a pilgrimage in memory of my grandmother Pauline Bramley, who I affectionately called 'Mama'. Pauline was the youngest of four children. When World War II broke out her family stepped up to support the war effort, like so many families did. John, her eldest brother, was posted to Burma. Sister Dot served as a wireless operator with the Auxiliary Territorial Service, and their father, William, who had already served his country during WWI, lied about his age and joined up to be stationed in Egypt. It was inevitable that he would be found out. Three years of service wasn't kind to the now 52 year old man. Finding out that he'd been a cobbler before the war, the army put him to work in Whitby mending the boots that kept the soldiers going.

A few years into the war Pauline's second brother Harry also joined-up, this time with the RAF. This left Pauline, and her mother Elizabeth, living together in Nottingham. On finding out her husband was in Whitby, Elizabeth locked the door, left some rent with the neighbours, and went off to find her husband after two days travelling on trains brimming with soldiers. The family lodged in upstairs rooms. Elizabeth found work in Sandsend walking the 8 mile round trip every day, and Pauline joined the local school.

At the end of the war my great grandparents had to make a difficult decision, to stay in Whitby their new home, or return to the busy city of Nottingham. They chose to return, much to the disappointment of 'Mama'. As an adult she visited Whitby regularly and after her death it felt right to have a memorial bench placed on the cliff top, a stone's throw from her old school. I did not have to chance to meet my great grandmother, but I feel very connected to this region through the line of strong women who got on with it even when times were hard. And I know that many of the other women who shared their stories felt the same.

During the sessions of knotting and chatting, everyone was working towards their final macramé panel, a design featuring a series of leaf shapes arranged over three rows. On completion of the final design the women were asked if they wished to contribute to the project. Their piece would adorn the skirt of a sculpture called Pilgrim Woman which would wear traditional Tudor clothing of Kirtle, Shift and Bonnet. I received a total of 43 donated macramé panels, each one different to the next, some large with loose knots, others tiny with tight knots, and we wondered how to attach them to the dress. After much deliberation at the foundry we decided to scan each one and digitally add them to the skirt to preserve their individuality.

The women loved the thought of leaving their mark on the community — many talked of their sense of pride from being involved in a project celebrating the role of women in our shared history. Although the women in my project may not be related to the women who left our shores four hundred years ago, we are connected to the same places, we walk in their foot-steps, the connections of women are endless.

Walking around Whitby with my father, his mother Pauline's home, her school, the port and even walking to Sandsend and back, gave me that feeling of connection, not only to this place, but to my grandmother and great grandmother. They might not have enjoyed the sandy beach walk as we did, as it would have been rather different during war time. There would have been no children running around, no surfers, perhaps no dogs leaping in the waves. But maybe some of the sounds would have been the same — the endless chatter of gulls, the crashing of the waves, and the sound of ships unloading their catches of the day.

Visiting a place, engaging all the senses whilst thinking of people from the past, is perhaps why so many of us chose to make personal pilgrimages. To many of the women who took part in the project, it wasn't just their weaving, but the shared stories embedded in the work, our shared our roots, which bonded our little community.

> *"We are connected to the same places, we walk in their foot-steps, the connections of women are endless.*









Rachel Carter is a sculptor based on the border of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, working with ancient techniques combined with the latest technologies. Sadly, her touring exhibition of Pilgrim Woman has been postponed due to Covid-19. You should be able to see it at Gainsborough Old Hall, Mansfield Library, Beeston Library, and West Bridgford Library when the situation allows.



A COMMUNITY KNITTED TOGETHER

BY HELEN ACKROYD





Libraries are part of the landscape of geographical communities, but it is the people in them that make them breath. Across the county of Nottinghamshire, many quietly talented groups of almost exclusively women meet in library spaces to create work, share skills, and socialise.

They are the knitters, the crocheters, and the crafters, brought together in informal groups through a shared activity. They may never have met each other without it, but the love for what they do binds them together.

They meet in library spaces across the county forming a larger community which unites each year to use their creative talents for charitable causes. In 2020 Inspire's knitting community was challenged to make 400 hats to mark the 400 years since the Mayflower journey. Hats 400! is connected to the wonderful Knit for Peace UK which distributes knitwear to hospitals, women's refuges, drop-in centres, prisons, community groups, and hospices as well as to refugee camps, or in desperate war-torn conditions.

Closer to home, as Covid-19 hit us hard, libraries closed, and social gathering diminished, Hats 400! could have fallen by the wayside, but the call went out and the needles went into action. Since Inspire re-opened its doors, woolly wonders have arrived for onward travel to where they are most needed.

Over 700 hats have come in so far. Established group members continued to make and knitters new to the craft took on the challenge from their homes to learn a new skill during lockdown. All the knitters should feel proud of their collective endeavours. If you would like to see their work some of the hats will be displayed online from October 2020 on the Inspire website link below.

Is it possible to remain part of a community while in isolation? You can bet your hat on it!

Helen Ackroyd is Libraries and Culture Manager at Inspire: Culture, Learning and Libraries, a Community Benefit Society run by its members with the communities they serve at the heart of its values.

inspireculture.org.uk

Knit for Peace is an initiative of the Charities Advisory Trust. Currently, alongside Knit for Peace, the main projects are The Good Gifts Catalogue, Card Aid, Peace Oil and The Green Hotel in India.

knitforpeace.org.uk



I am often rushing through the market with an impossible list and a deadline. Sometimes I arrive when the stalls are packing up and sweep into my bag whatever remains: the half bunches of coriander, the bowl of yellow tomatoes and some slightly wrinkled peppers. I am often rushing through the market with an impossible list and a deadline.

THE MARKET

BY SONYA HUNDAL

As a baker and market trader, I know that the last-minute customer is never a problem. What we dislike the most, is the straggler who asks for things that have already been sold. Today, I am standing in the market and listening. The stall has become a device for capturing stories from the people in the town.

'The market has great fish, great cheese and great plants - not to eat!' says Lis Ward. She is glad the market is still here.

'You get to know others and to hear other voices', says Maria, admitting that the market is, 'Not a young person's thing'. She says it's not clinical like a supermarket and has more variety. She comes for the arts and the crafts, the flowers, the fresh produce and of course, the tates. When I ask which butcher she prefers, she tells me about the sausages and the best cuts that are available from the three butchers in the town. The only food she likes elsewhere are fish and chips in Skegness.

Margaret and Richard like cucumbers, tomatoes, grapes and anything fancy. They have come from Wisbech to Boston and Richard is holding a bag of daffodil bulbs. He is already thinking about the Spring. He says, 'So many of the markets have been depleted. This one is still vibrant.' Babs has been in Boston for forty-four years and although she comes into the market every week, it isn't as good as she remembers Babs usually walks into town, occasionally bringing the car in for Lidl. Her day has been timed around her flu jab. She'll be having lunch with her granddaughter after. On the market her favourites are: the craft stall, the watch stall and the vape stall because, 'They do a lot of household stuff like gloves, tin-foil and visors.'

Jan has bought sausage rolls and chicken pies for the freezer. She doesn't often come to the market on a Wednesday. She is part of a team of volunteers building a Lego replica of the Boston Stump and she realised that she had forgotten a couple of bricks. She makes bread at home using flour from the Maud Foster Windmill. The church shop sells the flour and the fundraising Lego bricks.

Barry likes all the foods – that's the problem! He also likes beer (in moderation) and he's trying to cut-down. Barry is retired and he has come to walk around Boston and to talk with his mates on the stalls. Even though it is difficult to carry shopping back to the car from the market, Janet also enjoys the walk. For her, it's good to be outside and to be able to buy plants and bulbs from here too.

In the market, the story trade reveals strong flavours and variety. To stand still means I have been able to savour them. The baskets on my stall are full and you can sample: Cooking, Eating, Vegetables, Fish, Samphire and Boston Crab.

Eating

'I believe food is just fuel to power the body,' Tony says. He does not like to eat garlic or curry as it 'spoils his taste buds'. While Tony talks about Turkish history, his wife, Pam explains that he also eats no fat and that it has to be trimmed for him off the meat. The two of them have travelled the world and they mark the map North and South, East and Further East. Tony won't eat any local foods when they travel. Pam tries some things. They both like the ice-creams in Italy.

Cheryl is also not adventurous with food – she doesn't like: onions, spices or mushrooms. Her husband likes everything. Their children have different tastes too - one likes vegetables, the other dines out of the freezer. When Cheryl cooks, she makes many meals.



“ You get to know others and hear other voices



Cooking

Susan has a favourite recipe book and it’s always out on the book stand. It has pictures in colour and freezer tips but she can’t remember what it is called. She hadn’t imagined her life would be so focused around food and yet it’s come from the opportunity to be at home with her young children. She grows her own fruit and vegetables. She cooks and bakes with the seasons.
It’s currently apple-crumble season. She has learned, with help from her Latvian husband, how to cook and enjoy foods from an unfamiliar heritage and even to delight in the crispy and deliciousness of the fat on belly pork.

Vegetables

Heidi Siddiqi moved from Leicester to a smallholding in East Keal where her children and vegetables could grow. She comes to the market by bus and for twenty-years she’s been buying fresh produce from the same stall. She’s a vegetarian and she laughs when she says her now adult children are vegans. Since her stroke, it’s hard for her to recall what’s in her shopping trolley so, she takes a look – apples, leeks, mushrooms and potatoes.

Paul arrives at the stall with a wrapped cone of flowers. He is meeting his wife Pat for their weekly lunch at Fydell House. He will have a glass of red wine with his jacket potato and beans, because ‘that elevates a meal to a whole other level.’ He buys aubergines from the market even though he grows much of his own veg at the Willoughby Allotments. Yesterday, he delivered fresh produce from the allotments to the church food bank. We wonder if he buys flowers for Pat every week.
Sue loves Mediterranean food, which for her is anything with aubergines, peppers and tomatoes. She’s into bread making a skill honed during lockdown and she makes bread with pesto, sun-dried tomatoes, walnuts and olives. At the market, she’s already bought some aubergines.

Fish

Ahmed Afsa is with his wife and one of their young children. They have come to the market for the fish. Their favourites are salmon and sea bass. They enjoy the place; they like it and the fish here is tasty and fresh. Both are doctors, both Egyptian, both have a good sense of humour. They travelled from Saudi Arabia, arriving here at the start of lockdown and when they couldn’t find fresh fish in the supermarkets.

Samphire

Jane says samphire is the best food in the universe. She has been collecting since she was a child. When the tide was right, she would walk with her father for miles across the sea-marsh to gather cockles and to pull up the samphire.

That’s what they did, pulled up the whole plant, roots and everything. Now, she will take scissors and cut only the tips so the plant can thrive.

‘My tastes have changed – I’m much more refined now, darling!’, she says. After lots of washing, the samphire of past was boiled with vinegar to tenderise it. Jane lightly steams hers and ‘tries not to choke on the stalks.’ She recommends eating it with fresh fish, not whelks, they are disgusting. In her life, samphire, spinach, and chard are essential. She cannot live without greens.

Boston Crab

Liz Harness grew up on a farm where they would they would have slices of pork pie for breakfast and a big piece of meat from the butcher for the Sunday roast. The postman used to deliver a fresh crab every week and could cut veg from the field in exchange. Liz remembers a dish made with chopped field mushrooms. The liquid from boiling them was thickened for a sauce and all of it eaten with toast.





Sonya Hundal is a writer and baker.

She runs Greenfield Bakers, a small wood-fired bakery in the village of Friskney.

ruralfabulous.co.uk

ARRIVALS... POEMS BY YOUNG PEOPLE



FREEDOM

BY KAILA LYTTLE, 17

''Hah''
Freedom you say
That's white men's beast, black men could never tame
Freedom
''Hmm''
freedom you say.
like hawks feasting on a mockingbird's nape
Free - like bullets propelling through time and space.
marking black silhouettes against a whitened frame
With hands armed with nothing but the tumorous fate
''I don't have no gun sir ''
Just this bloody
I - mean - brown
I - mean - black
Un-ripened
bitter taste of
Freedom
Free
like the madman with scripture as his law
Or the drunken plight of a patriot closing his doors
Freedom
Like the sweet taste of
Indigenous land to a colonial tongue
Freedom
Like the wild-eyed women with woven fruits on her sleeve
And embroidered
Lust
I - mean - legs
I - mean - lemons
Down the seams
That their eyes can't help but touch
That their hands cannot help but reach
What is permission to a beast that does not act when it's free?
Freedom?

WATCH

BUS JOURNEY

BY STELLAN PHIPPS, 15

There's a man on a bus,
On a very busy bus,
And he's sitting at a window seat,
And his legs are wide open –
As if part of him is broken –
And his very simple title is Pete.

There's a woman on this bus,
On this very crowded bus,
And she's looking round to find a seat,
And she's very, very tired,
Because she's just gotten fired
And she really needs to rest her feet.

The woman finds the seat next to Pete,
And sits down,
But there's one big issue right here:
Pete's legs are too wide,
On the other lady's side
And she feels that their legs are rather near.

She has tightened both her legs,
So they look like little pegs –
Which are much too shy to open up.
So she turns her head around
And exerts a little sound,
As if to say "I am sorry to disrupt"
And her eyes fill with fear,
'cos she can smell his stale beer
But her heart fills with courage and she states:
"I paid for my ticket, and you paid for yours,
So can you move to your side
and pull your weight"

MY FAMILY

BY BETHANY TRIMBEE, 14

There's a lot you don't know about me.
Even if you think you do!
Half of my family are from Greece;
the other half are from Surrey.
My mum is half from Newcastle.
But I have only ever known Derby.
I was an only child until I was six.
Then, along came my brother
– that changed everything.
My great granddad put in an asylum
after having a stroke.
On the other side, a war veteran.
You should know me, but you don't.



LOST AT SEA

BY MAZEN ABOELNOUR 13

I was lost at sea.
The subtle wind brushing across my face, I felt so free
The sound of the gentle waves moving so swift,
I felt so powerful although I was adrift.
Even though the situation was very bad
I felt neither worried nor sad.
Because in the end we all leave this world,
No matter what things we have achieved or learned.

The weather slowly started to change,
and the atmosphere became very strange.
It was then when I started to face reality,
I needed to get back home all on my own.
I started to think about my kids and wife,
they mean everything to me,
they are the best part of my life.

This gave me the urge to try and paddle but my arms were aching,
they could not stand the pain they were undertaking.
I tried to paddle again and again but I could not win,
the great blue sea just kept pulling me in.
The strong waves crashing against my boat,
I was so scared I had no hope.

It started to become very dark,
and below the cold ocean water, I saw a shark.
The wind was very strong,
and I feared I didn't have long.
I told myself there is no way,
I would survive to the next day.
I saw multiple flashes of lightning,
they made me shake with fear
as they were so frightening.
I felt broken and shattered,
And my boat was battered.

I don't know why life always turns on people like this,
it gives you a problem and leaves you in an abyss.
I looked around and realised it was only me,
and then a great big wave threw me into the depth of the sea.
Then, I heard voices above my head,
I overheard one of them saying "I think he's dead"
so I waved my hand and said "thank you, I thought my life had come to an end".
They wrapped me in a warm coat,
And gently placed me in their motor boat.
I am now no longer lost at sea, I'm free. I am free.

LIVES MATTER

BY KYRA-LEIGH JACQUES, 16

Innocent people being mistreated and murdered
The unheard voices of painful murmurs
I wonder what it'd be like without judgement of skin
Or when society allows to let everyone in.

What we need to remember is that all lives matter
Otherwise eventually, the world might shatter
Human life matters more than your controversial feelings
So let's come together and drop unnecessary beatings.

You post on social media emphasising your trust
But is your passion on this something we trust?
Protests are happening all around the world
Making sure these voices are certainly heard.

We are all human, no matter what our ethnicity
We need to get this message out, use our publicity
Work together, to stop rumours of evil lies
All Lives Matter - open your eyes!

WATCH

JOURNEY TO JOY

BY HANA AHMAD, 11

Have you ever felt so scared,
that you want to lock all your doors,
and throw away the key.
turn off your light,
make sure you don't see
darkness at the end of the tunnel,
the crashing waves at sea?

But what you don't know,
is that what your actually afraid of,
your life-long fear,
is starting a new path,
a new atmosphere.
But the question is,
why do you always see darkness,
and over-look success?

When you haven't even opened the door,
but you still second guess.
Like the sun and moon,
and day and night,
the road to accomplishment
must have some bumps,
or it's just not right.

So please dear reader,
when the door is unlocked,
and the time is just right,
Walk the path with your head held high,
and don't even think of closing your eyes,
the road to success is never an easy ride.

WATCH

WITH THANKS TO

TRANSPORTED

West Lindsey DISTRICT COUNCIL

UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN

CENTRE FOR CULTURE AND CREATIVITY

BOSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

LOTTERY FUNDED | Supported using public funding by ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

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Pilgrim Roots

WRITING EAST MIDLANDS

Nottinghamshire County Council

delivered by

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Transported Art, University of Lincoln
Brayford Pool, Lincoln, LN6 7TS, UK

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