

# Mother Trees Connect the Forest



Celebrating migration.

*Nurturing connection, creativity and wellbeing in Dover and Margate*



**Untitled** (Woman wearing a Romani flag shawl) by Jarmila Petrašova

## Samphire Group Artworks (Dover)

As part of Samphire's Czech and Slovak Roma Healthy Lifestyles After-School Club in Dover, Joy worked with Iveta Janova (Inclusion Development Officer at Samphire) to run five painting workshops.

8 women and 20 children, whose spoken languages include Romani, English, Slovak and Czech, participated in the painting workshops at Dover Big Local.

For the Samphire group, this has been a follow-on project. Joy and Iveta worked with the mums in this group on Joy's previous project Nice To Meet You/ Som

Rado Hoij Tumen Spindzardom. In Mother Trees Connect the Forest mums and children in the Samphire group worked together side by side, and were also joined by families new to the project.

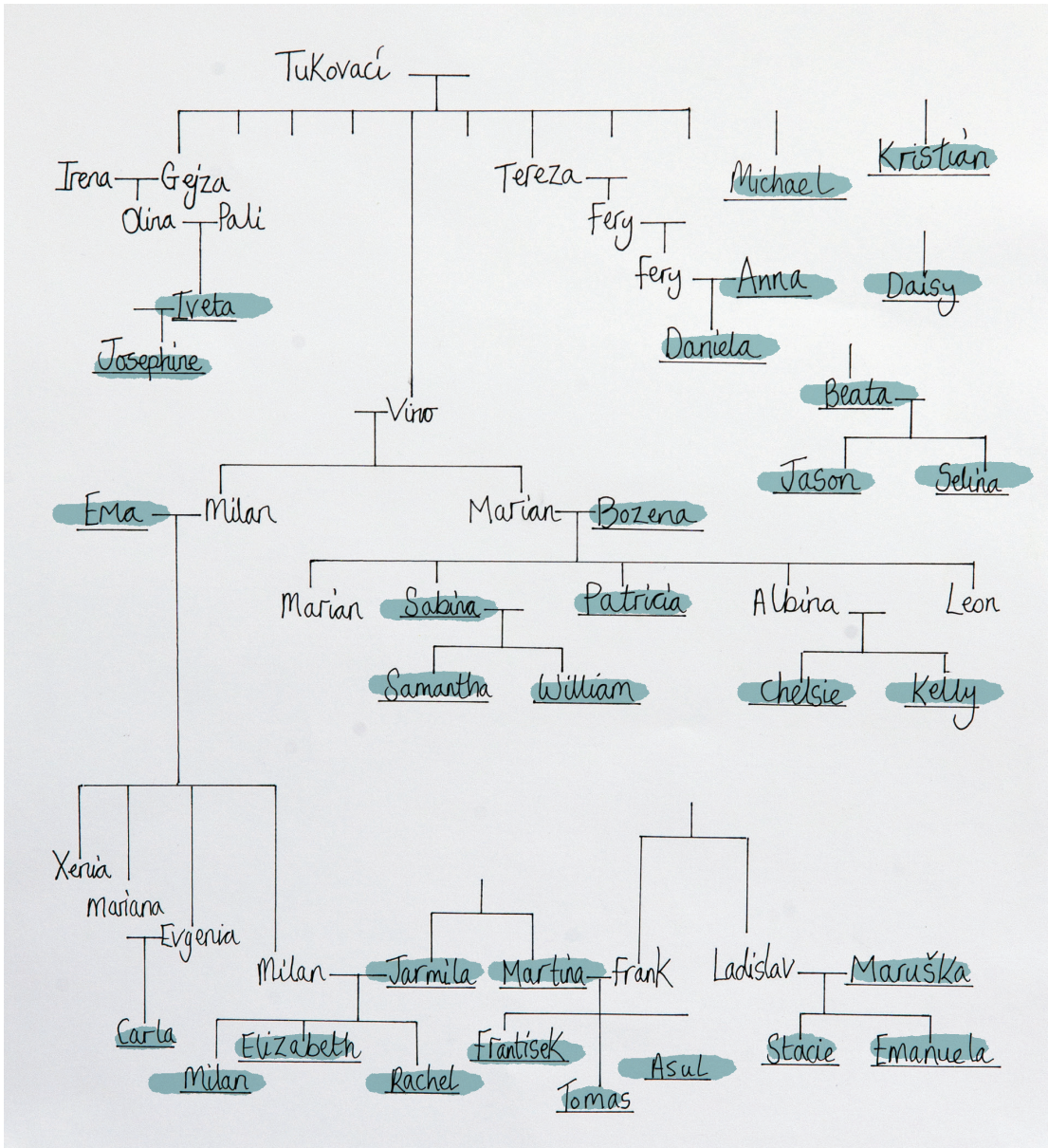
### With thanks to:

*Jarmila Petrašova, Elizabeth (Ellie) Gazsiova, Rachel Gazsiova, Milan Gazsi, Martina Petrašova, Frantisek (Frank) Čonka, Tomas Čonka, Asul Čonkova, Anna Gazsiova, Daniela, Beata, Jason, Selina, Maruška, Stacie Čonkova, Emanuela Čonkova, Sabina Gazsiova, Samantha, William, Kelly, Chelsie, Carla, Ema Gazsiova, Kristian, Bozena, Michael, Patricia, Daisy and Josephine.*





Birds In A Tree by Jarmila Petrašova



Samphire Group Family Tree





Emanuela



Rachel



Elizabeth and Tomas

Elizabeth

Emma and Rachel





Untitled (Dream house) by Jarmila Petrašova

*“The art project brought us the opportunity to meet new people, but above all to show what is hidden in us, each of us has hidden talent.”*  
*- Jarmila Petrašova*

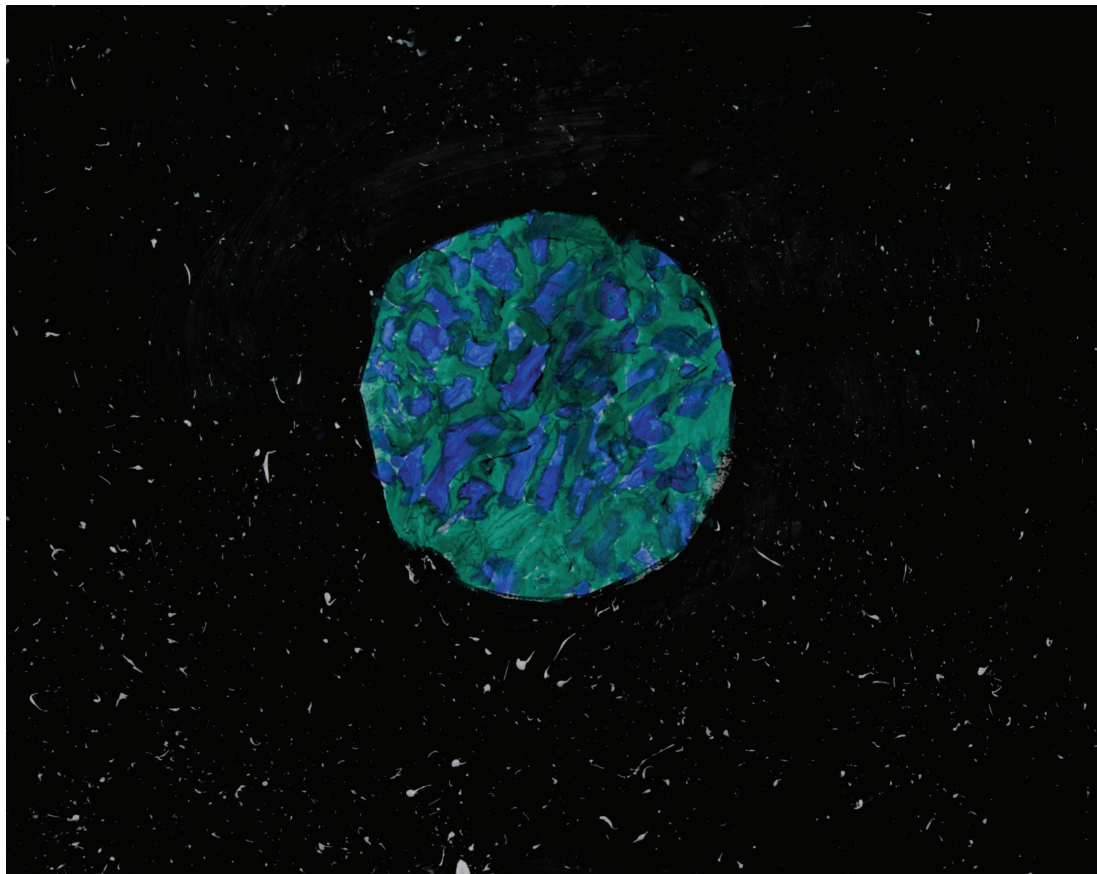
*“I drew an old woman because she represents life and the fact that she went through something in her life. It awaits each of us, and I think life is very short and that is why it should be lived and not just survive.”*  
*- Jarmila Petrašova*



Old Woman by Jarmila Petrašova



*“I was thinking about living in the world, and it makes me happy that I am alive and that I can see all of the animals that live on our planet. I painted the background black so you can see where it is daytime on Earth.”*  
*- Elizabeth Gazsiova*



**All Around The World** by Elizabeth Gazsiova

*“Painting makes me feel relaxed and I can draw my feelings out. I like watching my mum and my younger sister painting next to me at the workshops. My favourite style of art to make is abstract.”*  
*- Elizabeth Gazsiova*



**Untitled** by Rachel Gazsiova



Asul and Rachel

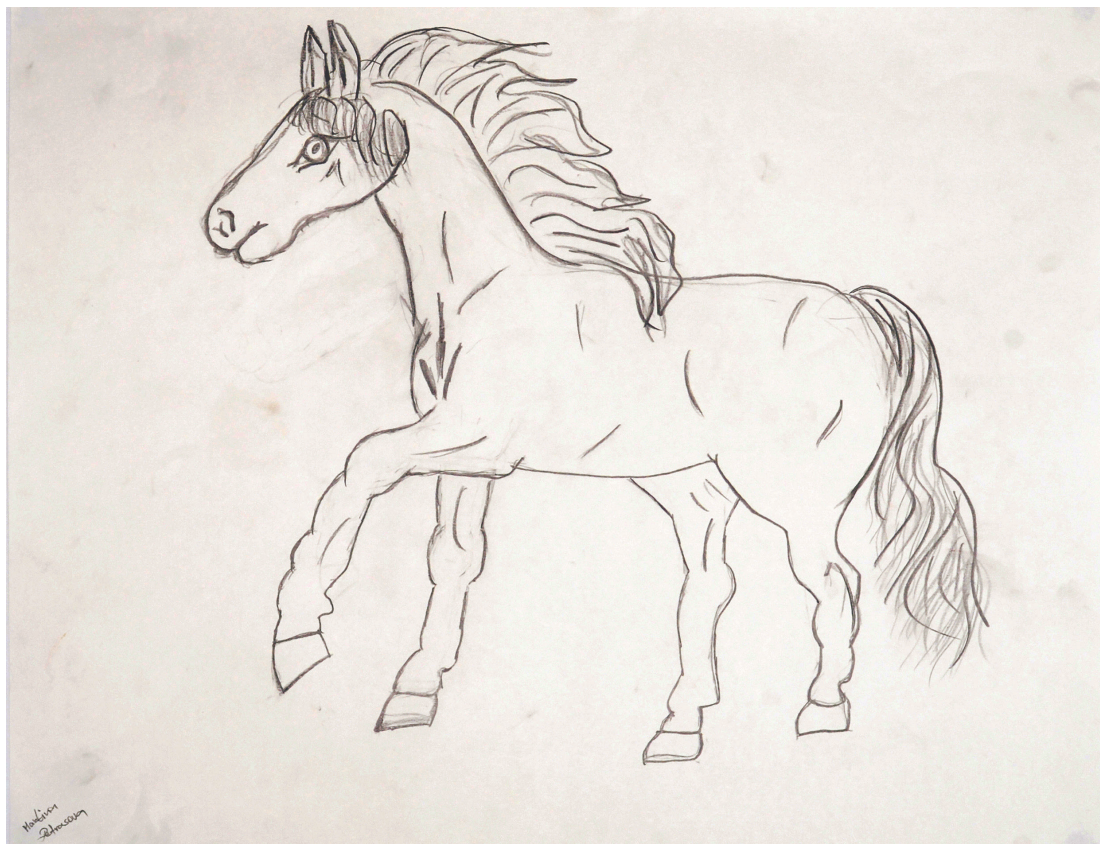


Milan Gazsi with his artwork Ruby



Jarmila, Rachel and Elizabeth painting at one of the painting workshops at Dover Big Local.





**Horse** by Martina Petrašova



**Space Man and Balloons** by Martina Petrašova



**Fairy** by Martina Petrašova



**Roma Heart** by Martina Petrašova

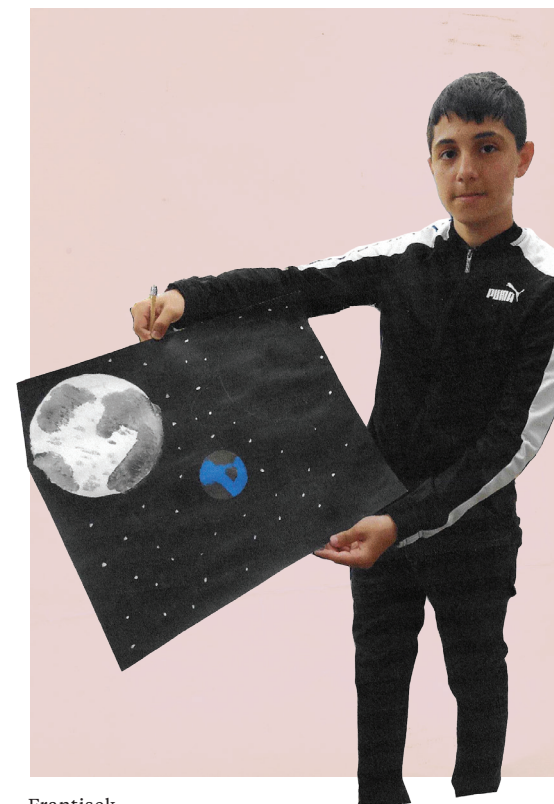




**Planets** by Frantisek Čonka



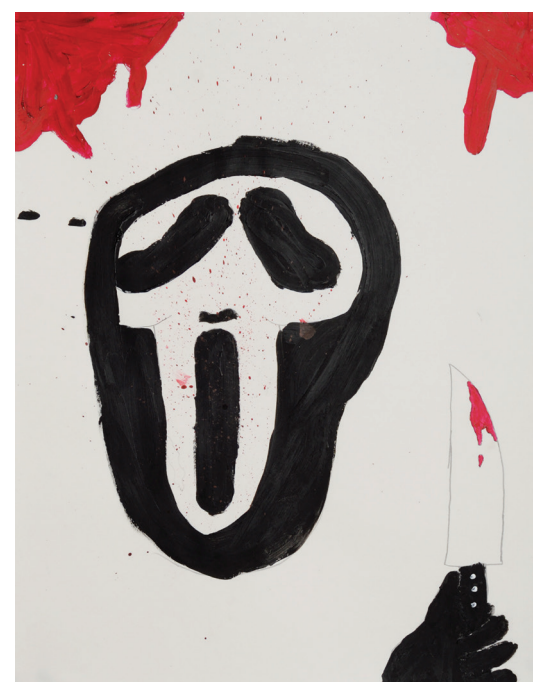
**Scream mask** by Tomas Čonka



Frantisek



Asul, Tomas and Frantisek



**Scream mask** by Frantisek Čonka



**Scream mask** by Jason





**Stars in the Night Sky** by Asul Čonkova



**Untitled** by Asul Čonkova



**Untitled** by Beata





Untitled by Maruška



Stars In A Night Sky by Stacie Čonkova



Rainbow by Emanuela Čonkova



Untitled by Sabina Gazsiova



Untitled by Sabina Gazsiova





**Colourful Sunset** by Samantha



**Untitled** by William



Kelly painting





Raining Hands by Chelsie

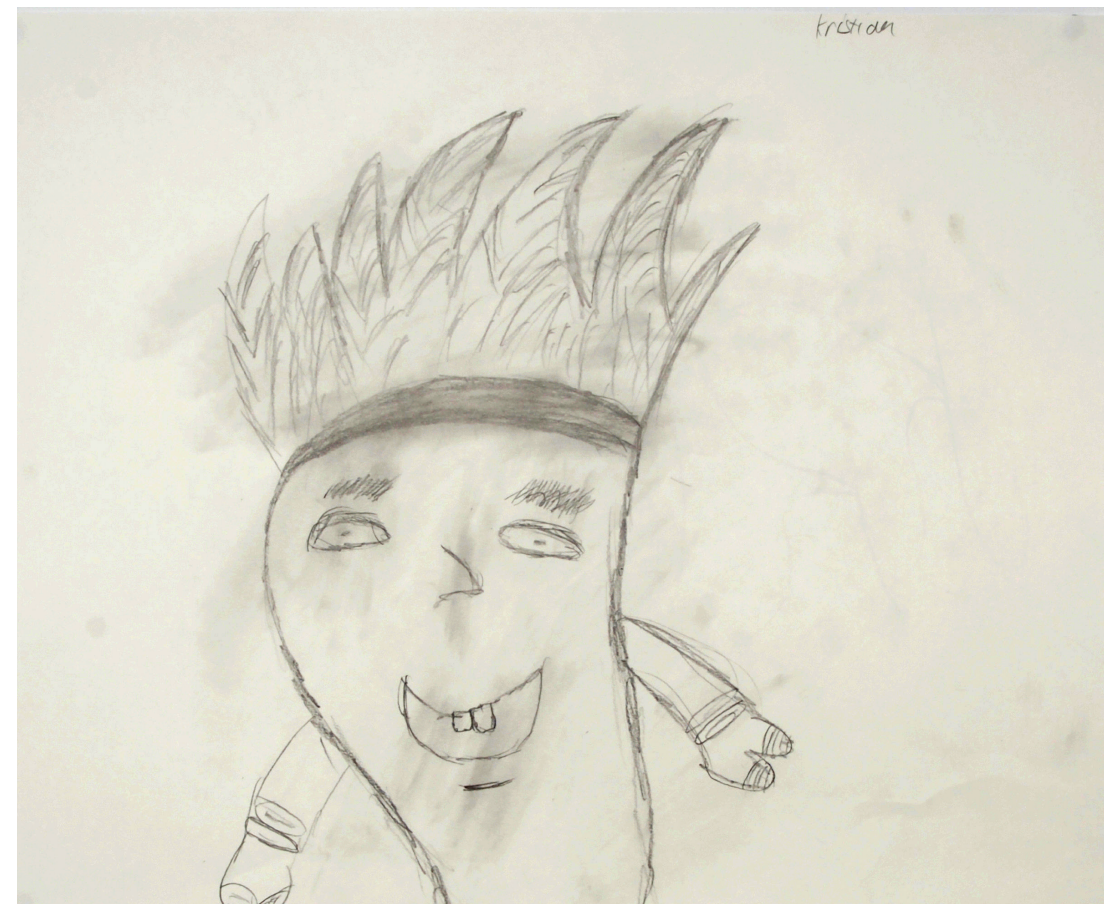


Graveyard by Carla





**Untitled** by Ema Gazsiova



**Untitled** by Kristian





**Untitled** by Phoebe

## **United Mothers Group Artworks (Margate)**

Joy worked with Pip Lim (ESOL Facilitator at Beyond The Page) to deliver five painting workshops at Cliftonville Cultural Space with the United Mothers group. United Mothers is a project run by Beyond The Page and is open to all women. The workshops included a crèche to reduce barriers to participation.

15 women participated in the painting workshops. Their countries of origin include Afghanistan, Nigeria, Turkey, Iraq, Vietnam, Brazil and Pakistan, and their mother tongues include: Dari, Farsi, Turkish, Kurdish, Vietnamese, Portuguese, English, Yoruba and Urdu.

*With thanks to Weronica, Tamana, Farida, Gulshang, Maliha, Gülay, Serpil, Linda, Rachael, Bibi, Sadaf, Phoebe, Göksu, Khadija, and Khushbu.*



Portrait of Weronica



*“My inspiration is the book of Graciliano Ramos, Vidas Secas (Dry Lives, 1963, Brazil). My painting says about the drought of the northeastern soil in Brazil, hunger and lack of water, the biggest on-going problem.*

*‘Ô sun! Scorching sun, Dusty Land, Days and days,  
months and months without rain  
And the poor farmer with the rough tool hits hard on the hard ground...’  
A translated extract of Seca do Nordeste by Fagner “  
- Weronica*



**Dry Lives** by Weronica



**Waves of Life** by Weronica





Candle in The Window by Tamana

*"I like the darkness growing when the sun is going down. I like lighting a candle. This is an imaginary scene. It is peaceful, I would like people to feel relaxed looking at my painting."*  
 - Tamana



The Sun Goes Down by Tamana

*"This is a sunset scene. I have painted a big evening sky with fiery colours and coconut trees framing the view. Opposite my house is the beach and as the sun sets I love watching the seagulls flying over the water."*  
 - Tamana

*"My mood is often calm and I am drawn to soft rich, calming colours."*  
 - Tamana



Portrait of Tamana

*"Painting makes me feel relaxed and comfortable. I am a creative person and I am looking for somewhere I can go to keep painting."*  
 - Tamana



*"You can paint how you feel in a picture." - Farida*



Portrait of Farida

*"If you are under pressure, don't worry – after darkness good things will come again." - Farida*



The Same Place, Different Times by Farida

*"Like our age, the summer comes, the autumn comes again and again but people get older and life runs away."  
- Farida*

*"In my painting I have shown a corner of Afghan women's lives. This lady goes to the farm with her child to help her husband in the farm work."  
- Farida*



Afghan Woman by Farida





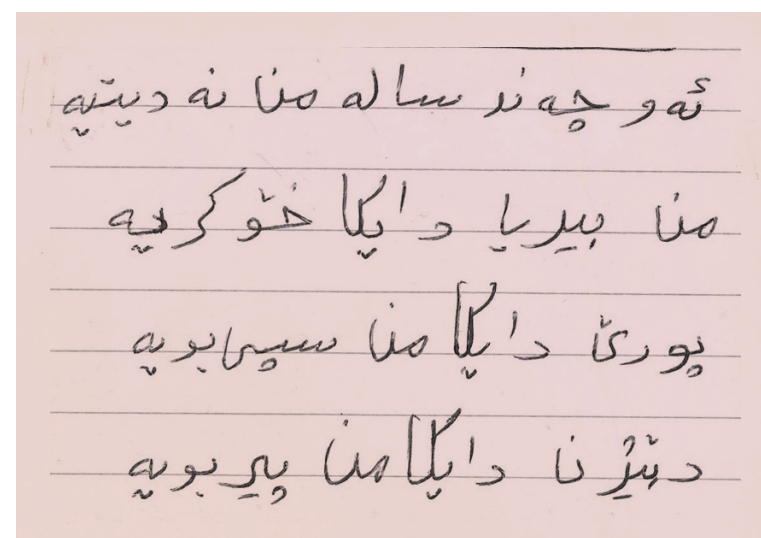
**Untitled** (Vase of flowers) by Gulshang

*“My name is Gulshang. I’m from Iraq. I have two kids.  
I love doing things with United Mothers.”*  
- Gulshang

*“My first painting”  
- Maliha*

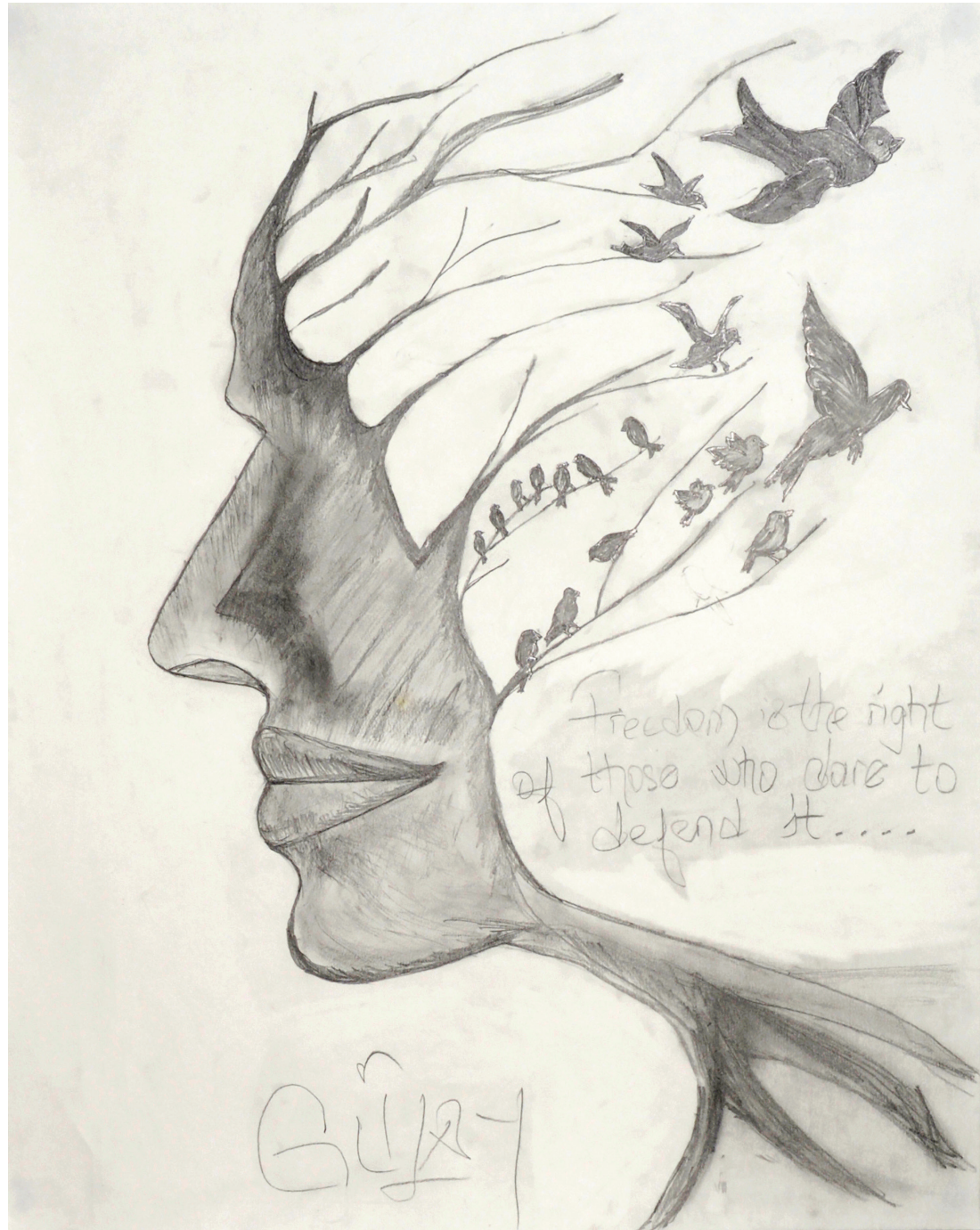


**Untitled** (Afghan house under a blue sky) by Maliha



A handwritten note by Gulshang





Freedom Is The Right of Those Who Dare To Defend It by Gülay

*"My soul is freedom."  
- Gülay*



Untitled (paint palette) by Linda



Untitled (birds, sharks and butterflies) by Serpil



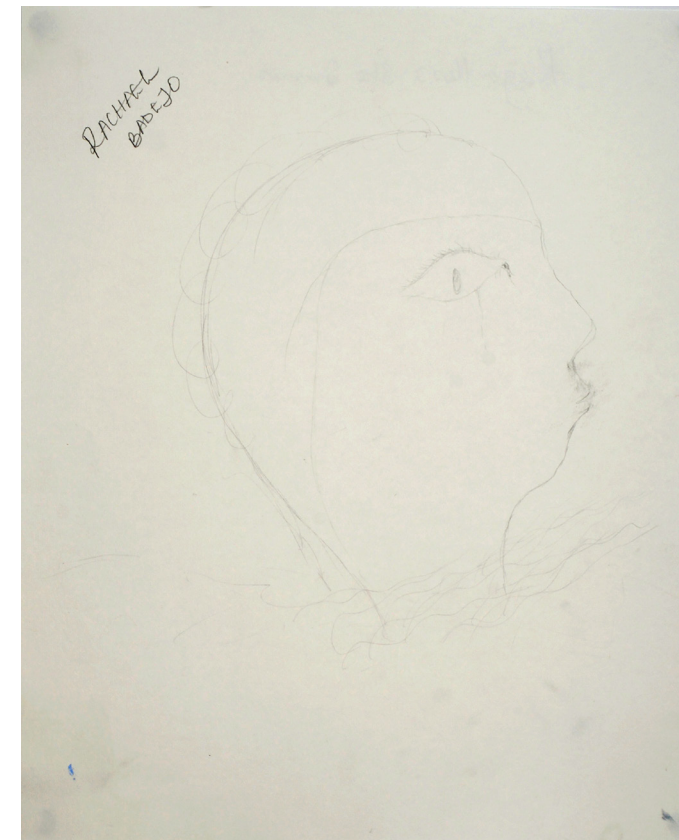
*"Painting is a journey towards healing for me." Rachael*



**Fierce Woman** by Rachael

*"Fierce Woman is about a strong and courageous black woman who's faced with lots of challenges (in law, financial, marital, motherhood, emotional trauma etc.) but she stands fearless facing her demons with the will to stand strong and move up regardless of the challenges on her way." - Rachael*

*"Losing my mum at the age of 11 as a little girl in Nigeria was quite traumatic. An emotion I never knew I had stuck within, until a few weeks ago when I joined this painting class and tried painting for the first time in my life. Painting has helped me to unlock inner thoughts and pains that have affected my lifestyle for years. It has given me freedom and a new zeal to face life differently. It is a safe place for me from the stress of motherhood." - Rachael*



**Regardless, She Survives** by Rachael

*"This is a drawing of a lady who is drowning in the issues of life that claim the lives of many, but she keeps her head up in the water with the zeal to triumph. Through it all, she will survive." - Rachael*





**Lady On Her Wedding Day** by Bibi

*"I painted this picture because in our country brides wear beautiful, colourful dresses. They enjoy so much their wedding day. She is so excited when she sees her friends coming to her wedding day. The groom gives her a gift of flowers and she is holding them in her hands. Her handbag matches her wedding dress. She went to a beauty salon to have her wedding make-up done. Her long hair is carefully arranged on one side – this is her personal choice. She dances with the groom at the end of the party." - Bibi*

*"I feel very good and relaxed when I am painting. I would like to do more painting. I really love painting in a group with my friends" - Bibi*



**Afghan House** by Bibi



*“Hi, my name is Sadaf, residing in the UK, originally from Pakistan. By education I am a pharmacist. I have been part of the group called United Mothers for the last 5 years.” - Sadaf*



Portrait of Sadaf

*“Scattered is about scattered thoughts, which most of the time we are unable to contain within ourselves. It’s a reflection of emotions, craziness and agony.” - Sadaf*

*“Every woman’s success should be an inspiration to another. We’re STRONGEST when we cheer each other.” - Sadaf*



Scattered by Sadaf

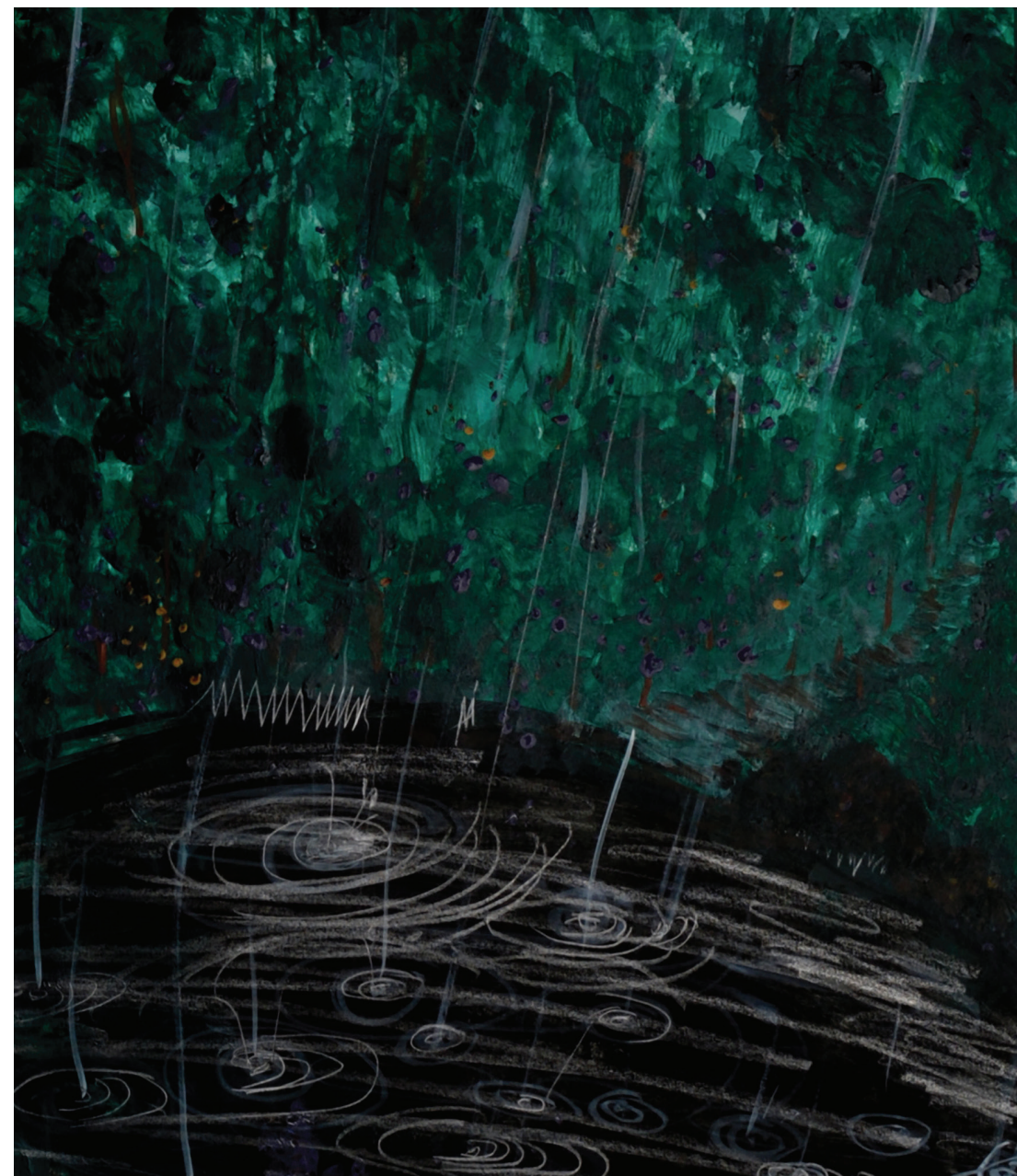
*“When you have a dream, you’ve got to grab it and never let go...” - Sadaf*





**The Looking In** by Phoebe

*“When I made this picture I got involved with my feelings inside – I looked into myself, I felt peaceful. I didn’t think about my worries. This picture is about looking in and seeing all parts of yourself.” - Phoebe*



**Untitled (Rain in a pool)** by Phoebe





**Untitled (flowers)** by Göksu



**Untitled (flowers)** by Göksu



**Bird** by Khadija





Portrait of Khushbu

*“When I made this painting I was thinking about my two daughters – they are my princesses. The girl on the right is my eldest; she is six and loves pink. The other one is my little one who is two and a half. She has shorter hair. Last night they were talking about being princesses and how they wanted to wear princess dresses and this was my inspiration.”*

*- Khushbu*



**Lovely Dream** by Khushbu

*“This is the first time in a very long time that I have been able to really let go and enjoy painting.”*

*- Khushbu*



**My Princesses** by Khushbu





Children drawing at the second movement workshop hosted by Cliftonville Cultural Space.

## The Storytelling Movement Workshops

To bring to life the project themes, dancer and artist, Rosa Cisneros, led two inspiring, movement workshops. These helped build a feeling of belonging and provided an opportunity for both community groups to meet. Rosa's workshops explored motherhood, sisterhood, nature and the lives of trees, and storytelling through dance. The interconnectedness of people and our relationship with our bodies in nature was also explored.

The workshops opened up a space for us to share and reflect on our explorations with paint through the vehicle of a different creative medium.



Rosa Cisneros leading the first movement workshop hosted by Cliftonville Cultural Space.





Children drawing at the first movement workshop hosted by Cliftonville Cultural Space.

*'My role in the project was to explore embodied ways of knowing and being, and to better understand if this bodily exploration could/would have any impact on the participants' artwork and their relationship as a group. I was blown away by the joy and pride that was in the space. The women looked very happy dancing and you could sense they were enjoying being in their bodies and also sharing the experience with their children.'*

*The movement storytelling workshops were built on dance principles honouring time, space and energy. Roma dance and ballet were fundamental to the sessions. Dance responds to the moment and is about honouring your environment. In an effort to do this I decided to sit and meditate on all of the images and paintings being sent in between the*

*sessions. After each session, I printed each picture and found one thing that spoke to me about the artwork. Then I tried to embody the painting and danced in a space responding to each image. Making notes and observing my gestures, energies, the emotions emerging, and colours, I choreographed two dances, one for the group to learn and perform and another solo piece that was shared as a finale for the session.*

*The music used in both workshops was a mix of Flamenco, Brazilian, Turkish, Iranian and Classical pieces. Each session respected the varying degrees of mobility and allowed each women to try new movements, challenge themselves while also have an option to dance with their children."*

**- Rosa Cisneros (July 2023)**



**Untitled** (Woman in flower dress) by Gülay



## Music and Poetry We LOVE!

### “Music I LOVE:

Fly Me To The Moon by Frank Sinatra”  
- Jarmila Petrašova



### “My chosen poem:

To see a World in a Grain of Sand  
And Heaven in a Wild Flower  
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand  
And Eternity in an Hour

By William Blake”  
- Elizabeth Gazsiova

### “Music I LOVE:

Easy on Me by Adele”  
- Tamana



### “My chosen poem:

I Lost My Fear by Rudy Francisco”  
- Tamana

Read it here:



### “My chosen poem is by Nadia Anjuman and opens with the lines:

“No desire to open my mouth,  
what should I sing of . . . ?”  
- Farida

Read the poem in full, here:



### “Music I LOVE:

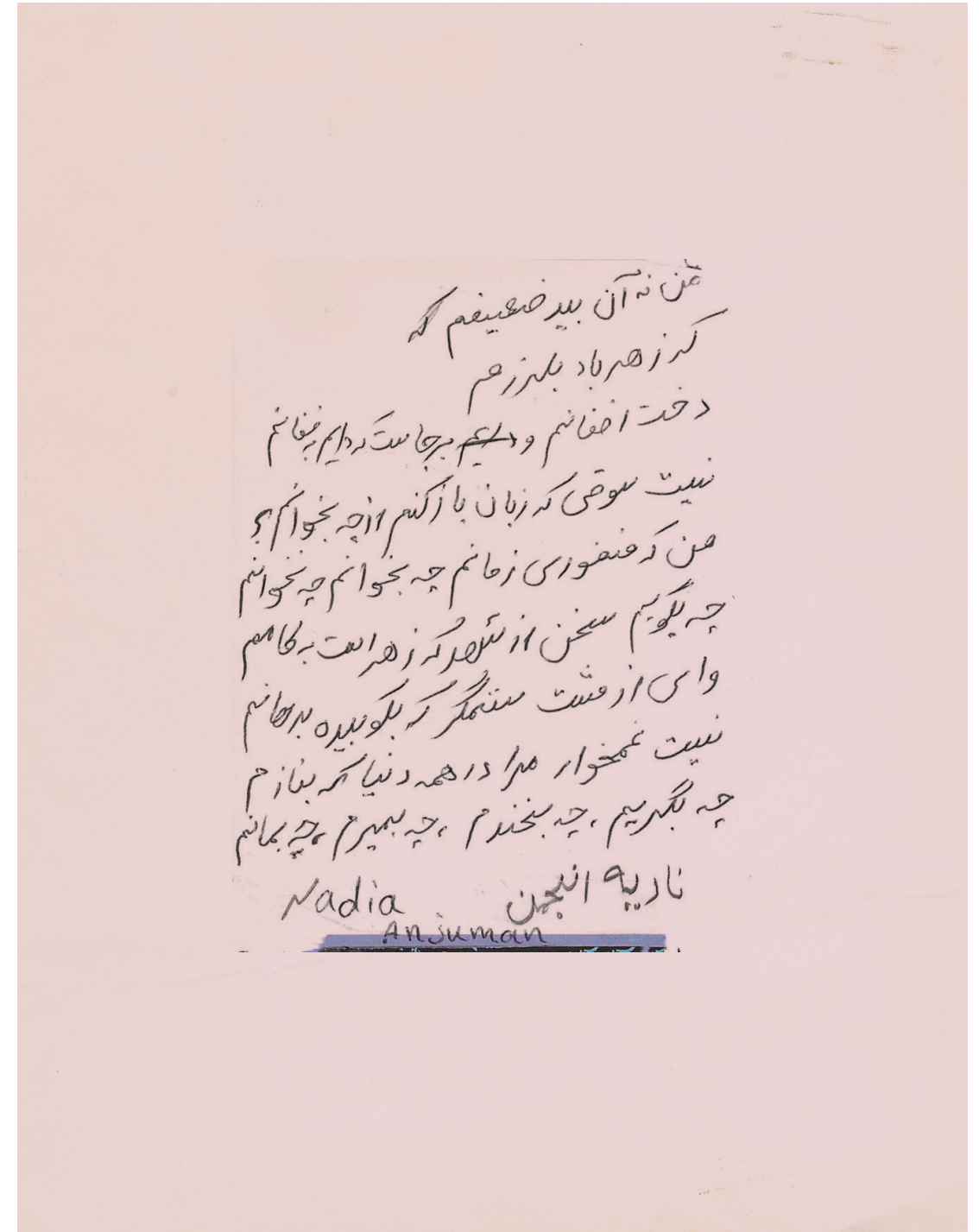
A song by Ahmad Zahir containing the following lines in translation- ‘Oh blue of my sea I came back, I came back. Now the sound of my feet. I came back. I came back. A moment of silence, listen! And hug me again.”  
- Farida

### “My chosen poem:

Poplars  
Oh popars, oh poplars  
My body is cold, my heart tingles.

An extract of a version of the poem by Metin Altıok, sung by Sezen Aksu in her song Kavaklar.”  
- Gülay

Listen to it here:





**“Music I LOVE:**

Goodness of God by CeCe Winans”

- Rachael



**“My chosen poem:**

My Mother

Who sat and watched my infant head

When sleeping on my cradle bed

By Ann Taylor”

- Rachael

Read the poem in full, here:



**“Music I LOVE:**

Take Me To Love by Aishwarya Rai (Bride and Prejudice English Version)”

- Bibi



**“My chosen poem:**

When I saw you first,

It took every ounce of me not to kiss you....

By Atticus”

- Bibi

Read the poem in full, here:



**“A quote I LOVE:**

‘How can you go so far, if you don’t know who you are?’ Winnie The Pooh”

- Phoebe

**“Music I LOVE:**

Return to Innocence by Enigma”

- Phoebe



“A poem I love is titled ‘I love you more than anything in this world’ in English.

Here it is in Farsi.”

- Khushbu. (Author not known)

من شما را بیشتر از هر چیزی در این دنیا دوست دارم

پرنسس زیبا و کوچولوی من!

هر کاری خواهم کرد

تا مطمئن شوم که شما

به شیوه درستی بزرگ می شوید

Bože prosím vždy stoj  
pri mne, keď z ruk život  
sa mi vymkne, buď pri  
každom mojom čine,  
nech sa nerozhodnem  
chybne. Či, keď zlyžm  
keď zlo vznikne,  
anjel strážny si to  
všimne, so svätou  
rukou ma zdvihne,  
a bolesť zlych  
skutkou zmizne.

“čista láska.”

Written by Jarmila Petrašova in her own words.





**Untitled** by Rachael Badejo



**COUNTERPOINTS.**



Supported using public funding by  
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