

From Heart to Limb to Pen.

Lyrics:

Look what you started, I seem to be coming out of my skin.

Synopsis

I have incorporated my love of music and writing, and my complex relationship with art into a collection of drawings and paintings featuring lyrics from some of my favourite songs. In the beginning it was the music evoking the memories and influencing the art. Somewhere along the line the memories influenced the art which brought its own lyrics. I also spent time doing small informal lyrical art sessions with friends, work colleagues and pupils in the school where I work. These sessions were entirely person-led. I asked an initial question about art and lyrics; then let each individual navigate. I found the entire experience, from start to finish, compelling, cathartic and enlightening, not just for me but also for some of the others involved. My own self-reflection, and the reflections of others, have been included in this portfolio. Each section introduces itself with its own lyric.

We sing with our heroes, 33 rounds per minute.

Introduction

My relationship with music feels easy and free-flowing. Music is a necessity; it runs through every fibre of my being. Although I have no control over it, I love and take great pride in the fact that I share my 8th January birthday with David Bowie, Elvis Presley, Shirley Bassey, and Jamie T. I sing, and I play the guitar and piano for fun. I have songs that represent my past, albums for

different moods, and playlists I fall asleep to. There are songs that bring me immense joy, uncontrollable pain and everything in between. Music has helped me through the darkest parts of my life, even when I could not admit I was struggling. Lyrics were in my blood. My Dad was nearly fifty when I was born but music transcends generations. Music and poetry helped us bond. He was a fan of music from the mid-twentieth century and he was into country music. Buddy Holly, Dolly Parton, Willie Nelson, Patsy Cline, Charlie Daniels, I learned all the lyrics to impress my Dad.

“I like it but it does not like me.” A line that David Hampson used pretty much every day of his life, as far back as I can remember. One of those classic Dad clichés. He used it to avoid foods he considered too adventurous; to get out of places he did not want to go; to explain why he did not take part in certain activities.

My relationship with art has always been complex. Today I try to embrace all aspects of my individual creativity. However this was not always the case. I have always loved art but for a long time I felt like it did not like me. Drawing pictures, art competitions, and still-life drawing were sources of huge anxiety for childhood and adolescent me. I have a traumatic memory of crying my way through a Year 7 art exam in school. I was supposed to draw a silver kettle that was sitting in front me. An impossible task. I was inconsolable. My art teacher, a guy in his late fifties who smelled like strong coffee all the time, did not know what to do with a sobbing twelve-year-old and her kettle. He took my piece of paper and told me not to worry, added a few extra lines to make the blob on my page look a bit more kettle-ish...and told me to sit down and leave it. This traumatic shambles of a Friday morning culminated in a result of 55% in my end of year art exam. This was not even the first time an adult had fixed my “art failures”. My Mum won a church Christmas card competition for me...I was praised highly for my beautifully drawn nativity scene... drawn by

my Mum. I do not even think I did all of the colouring because my colouring was not the neatest. I wanted my drawings to look like their subject and no matter how much I tried, it just did not happen. This felt like a huge failure to me. I had not found my art yet. I wish I had known about Natalie Rogers sooner, she could have told me that not all art needed to be a “pretty picture”. That would have helped immensely.

A miracle hit when, as an awkward thirteen year old, I joined my friends in their goth/emo phase. Part of this phase involved doodling and writing on your school folders in Tipp-Ex. Not just any doodles. Band names and song lyrics. This was perfect, song lyrics were my favourite. I was finally able to participate in an art activity where I could not fail, and I enjoyed it. This was my art. I was not alone in this. My school friends had very similar folders, favourite bands and lyrics scrawled and scratched to show our rebellion, our current loves, likes and heartbreak. Tributes to our favourite things and insults to those who wronged us - all through song. This seems to have been a phenomenon all over. My husband Craig revealed he had a history folder full of Iron Maiden lyrics. My friend Hannah, who had a similar childhood relationship with art that I did, still found joy in doodling My Chemical Romance lyrics alongside small doodles of broken hearts and coffins. While it is many years since I had the Tipp-Ex out, lyrics stay with me.

I was twenty four when my Dad died. It was very sudden and I did not deal with it. I did not know how. Thirteen years later, I am still processing it. At the time I went through the motions. I cried a fair bit. I loved all the flowers people sent. I ate ice cream with my best friends. I felt brave reading at his funeral. I was able to describe his diagnoses and his last few days very clinically. It was like I was describing someone else. Even now when I remember those few weeks after his death, they do not feel real. As with

most times of my life, I turned to music and lyrics to try and help me through, in whatever way my brain could cope. There were some songs I could not listen to, mostly because they reminded me of my Dad too much. Other songs had similar chord progressions or talked about death. It was a place I could not go to. I was not ready. I still get a lump in my throat when I hear or sing certain songs.

Playing melancholy songs that somehow made us feel a whole lot better.

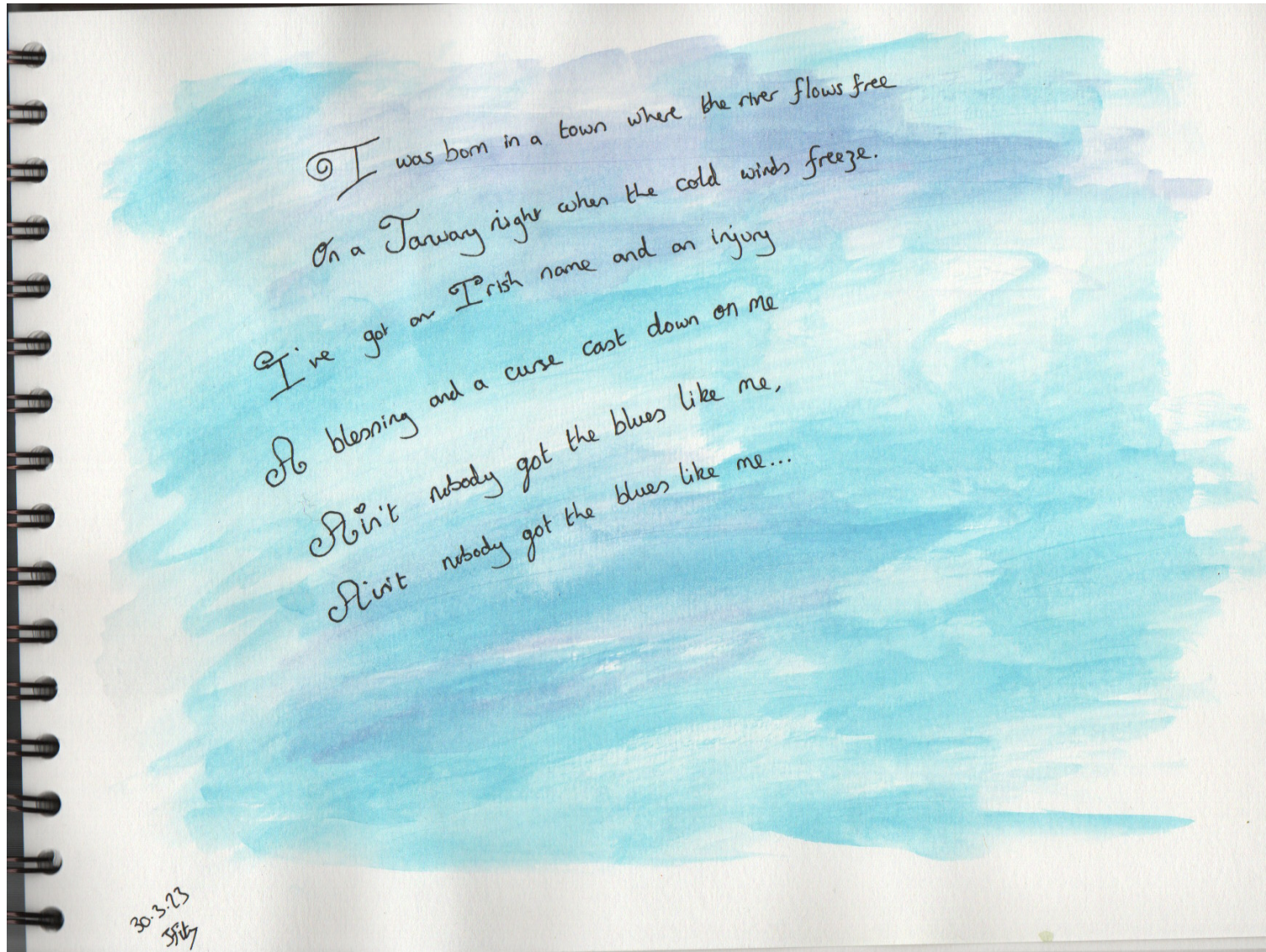
Portfolio inspiration

The inspiration for this portfolio burst into my brain like a catchy new song. A lyric project; a place where art and music could meet. I had not planned for it, but this collection has aided in my healing. The art that came with the lyrics uncovered old memories that I thought had disappeared forever. In some ways, it feels like a beautiful tribute to my Dad and I absolutely relish this opportunity. I read an article where Natalie Rogers spoke about her grief after the death of her father. She said “I thought I should be over my grief in a month but these two women [Connie Smith Siegel and Coeleen Kibert] gave me permission to continue expressing my river of sadness,” (Rogers, 1993, p. 3). Her entire ethos was that everyone has the natural innate potential to be creative; and if one is in a safe and supportive environment, this creativity can be unlocked in order to express, release, and let go (Rogers, 2013). This became my aim. I spent a week listening to some of my favourite songs; mostly by one particular band, The Gaslight Anthem. As the music flowed, I was drawing, sketching and painting memories, creating landscapes in the moment. I would pause and reflect and write notes about my process at that moment. I also took time to go back and write about what I could see and how I felt afterwards. This process was wonderful and exhausting. I have added a link to a song on YouTube in order to give a multisensory feel to my reflections. I do not own these videos but they have been uploaded by the bands

themselves and are available to be viewed by the public. These links can be clicked on and experienced while my pieces are viewed and reflections are read. I also spent a few days talking to friends, and later work colleagues and pupils in my class about their experiences of music and lyrics. When I told them about what I was doing, some were enthusiastic about trying it themselves, reminiscing about old drawings and creating new ones. They have all given me permission to share their art and reflections. I also shared my own art with a couple of friends and was floored by their interpretations and reflections on my pieces. This experience has been invaluable. The title of my collection gives a sense that it is unfinished as there is nothing following the colon. I intended to add a tag-line but I had so many ideas and meanings that I decided to leave it blank and leave room for whatever needs to be there in the moment every time I read it. I invite those reading to choose their own tag-line.

#1 *Ain't nobody got the blues like me*

Red At Night – The Gaslight Anthem. [Click to listen on YouTube.](#)



I was born in a town where the river flows free
On a January night when the cold winds freeze.
I've got an Irish name and an injury
A blessing and a curse cast down on me
Ain't nobody got the blues like me,
Ain't nobody got the blues like me...

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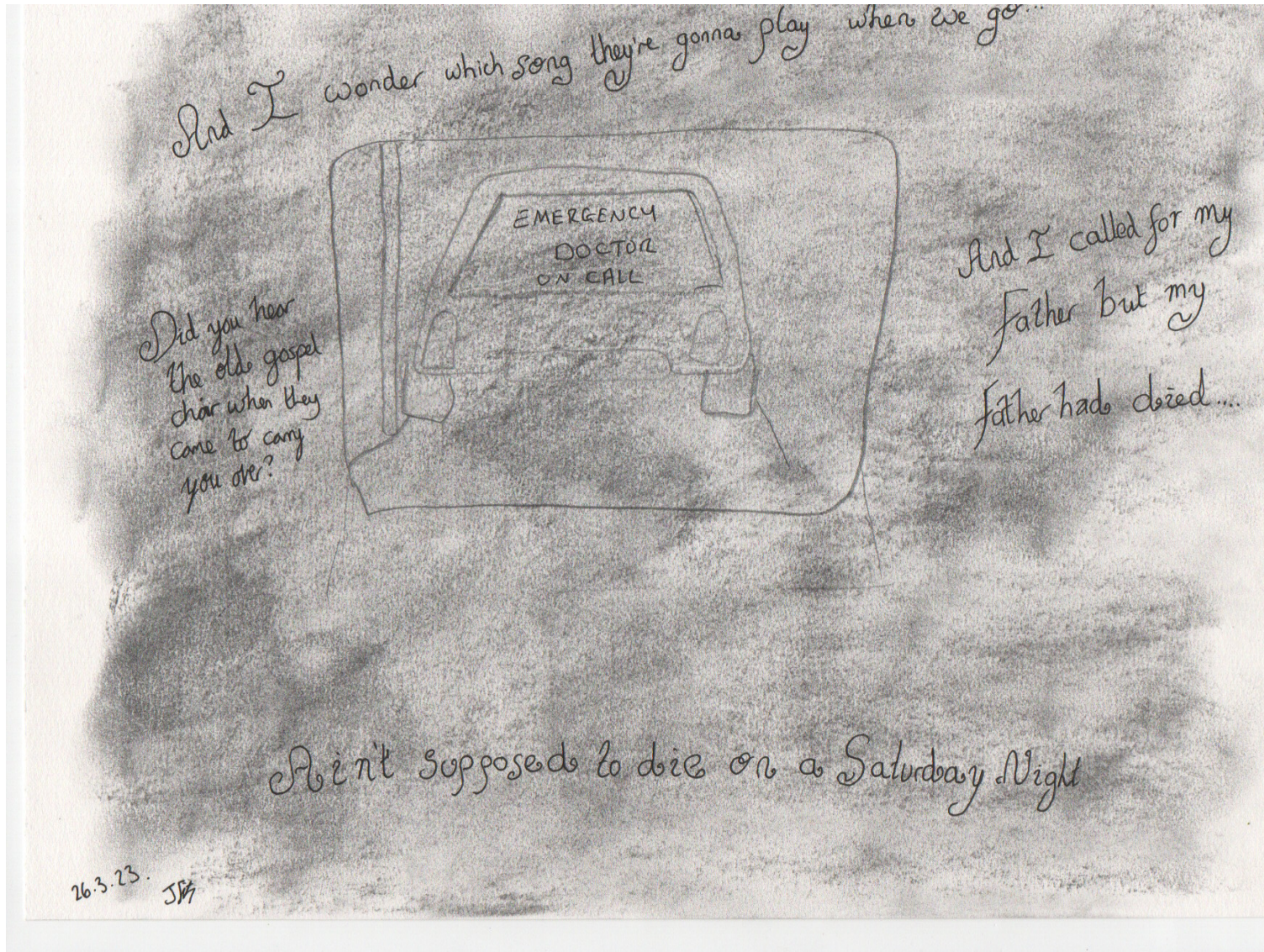
This was actually one of my final creations during my week of painting. I had not really planned to do any more pieces but the song came on and I felt the urge to paint and it became its own little tribute. However, once I had reflected on it, it felt like it needed to be my beginning. It feels like a root piece. This features on The Gaslight Anthem album Sink or Swim but it does not have the same raw, fast pace of the rest of the album; something I will visit later on. I relate so much to the lyrics in this song, even down to the literal facts that I was born in a town near a river in January and it was freezing; in fact it was snowing. I also have an Irish name; as with many people from Liverpool I boast an Irish heritage. The gentle tempo, mixed with the harmonica solo has that gentle lull; maybe a feeling of being on a boat.

I think I chose watercolour blue behind the lyrics to reflect “ain’t nobody got the blues like me” rather than opting for reds to sit alongside the “red sky night” that gives the song its title. I am unsure if this was meant to be water or sky. Different shades of blue, potentially reflecting the complex nature of my emotions when I hear this song. “Ain’t nobody got the blues like me” is a sentiment I relate to. The link to this line is so strong that I do not even mind the use of double negatives, even though double negatives have always made me feel uncomfortable. At various times during my life I have felt different, isolated; like nobody could ever possibly understand what I was going through. It feels like quite a cliché teenage sentiment - “Nobody understands me!” In actual fact, although nobody can share my full pain or fully understand my entire life, many people have had similar experiences to me. I have found, even during this process, others have shared similar and familiar existences. While my blues are different to others’, I have been able to appreciate people’s journeys as well as my own.

One particular line features in this song, “there was a cold wind blowing when I left that night, and the warning bells rang alright alright, shoulda stayed home with you that night.” This is one of those lyrics where I have added an extra context and meaning of my own. When my Dad died I felt so much guilt for going out on that Saturday night when I could have spent his last night hanging out with him; so when I heard certain lyrics, the feeling of guilt would weigh quite heavily on me. However, the time I have spent in my own personal therapy has helped me open up so that I am more able to understand that grief occurs in different ways. Guilt, while it is complex, can be viewed as a relatively useless emotion because I cannot go back and change things. The final line of the song is “it’s a red sky night and I’m doing alright, it’s a red sky night and I’m doing just fine.” So while I sit with my grief, and acknowledge the guilt, I am also aware that, all in all, I am doing alright. This piece is minimalist but I feel the lyrics speak for themselves against the blue sky backdrop.

#2 *And I wonder which song they're gonna play when we go*

[Listen to The '59 Sound on Youtube.](#)



This was the most hard-hitting part of my creations. It has been the hardest piece to reflect upon because it involves tapping into a place and a night that both haunts me and hides from me. I am relatively new to charcoal, tending to prefer watercolour, pencils and Sharpie pens. It is the most painful memory I have but it felt ready to come out. From the album The '59 Sound, I chose three lyrical lines from the song The '59 Sound and a line from the song American Slang.

I came home from a party at 2.30 a.m. on Sunday morning. I was not sure if I should go but my Mum had said it would be good for me to go and, to be fair, I did not need much convincing. My taxi home turned into our road and my usual phrase would be "Oh just stop by this lamp on the left please." Except an Emergency Doctor car was already parked there. I paid the guy and ran. The rest of the memory is a blur of a doctor's face, my Mum shouting at him because my Dad was in pain, my Dad's face. I think my Mum said "It won't be long now." My Dad died a few minutes later. I remember it being such a shock that it happened so quickly. He had not been ill for very long. Thinking back on it now, he was usually immovable once his mind was made up. I like to think he decided that it was his time.

My charcoal piece is my view from the taxi as I arrived home. In my memory I see the "Emergency Doctor on call" sign so clearly. As cliché as I fear it sounds, the darkness of the charcoal reflects the mood as I arrived home. Also the blurriness of the blended charcoal captures exactly what I feel about that moment in time. I blended until my hands were absolutely black. That night, I felt like I was moving in strange slow motion, a tunnel vision. Bizarrely it is how I imagine it would be portrayed in a television drama. The fact that I have never been able to do a car drawing justice did not even occur to me for this because I have no real

idea of the car. All I could focus on was this sign of the Emergency Doctor. Even though I have drawn the bottom of the lamppost, there is no light coming down from it.

The position of the lyrics feels a little haphazard, I had no real plan for that. I just put them where my hand put them. I suppose the way they surround the middle sketch could be a small tribute to all the feelings that surround my memory of that night. The lyrics themselves are so important to me. In some ways they are very literal. Both songs set off very deep emotions in me. For weeks, months maybe, afterwards I could not hear either of these songs without crying. Sometimes if I was driving home somewhere in the dark I would put them on in the car just so I could cry angry tears. The injustice, the guilt, the unanswered questions, the anger, the abandonment, the pain. I would not speak about my Dad to anyone unless it was to tell the standard answer when people asked me “what happened?” I had nice sterile stock answers. Even in therapy now there are times when I prefer to circumvent the whole subject if I can get away with it. Creating this piece gave me an immense feeling of release, and also relief. The lyrics and charcoal were able to convey what I needed to say perfectly.

Showing this piece to my friends was a surreal experience. I feel the meaning behind it because of my own grief struggles and I did not really know what I expected from my friends. I showed Emer, my friend from work. I bravely went to her hoping she would not have her critical Art Coordinator head on. While therapeutic art does not need to be perfect or pretty, showing my art still carries that anxious feeling with it. Emer cried. I was not prepared for that. My initial feelings were guilt mixed with sheer confusion. I just kept apologising to her. I had no idea that anyone would feel something so strong for my blurry, scratchy art. For another friend Hannah, it reminded her of the story of her Mum’s Dad’s death, Hannah’s mum going through a very similar

experience to my own. The fact that my picture triggered this memory in Hannah is just mind-blowing for me. It reminds me how common these experiences are, although grief and death is still seen as quite a taboo subject. It has given me a new appreciation for this piece even though it still feels really raw.

#3 I never got to tell him so I just wrote it down / I carried these songs like a comfort wherever I go

[Listen to I'da Called You Woody, Joe here.](#)



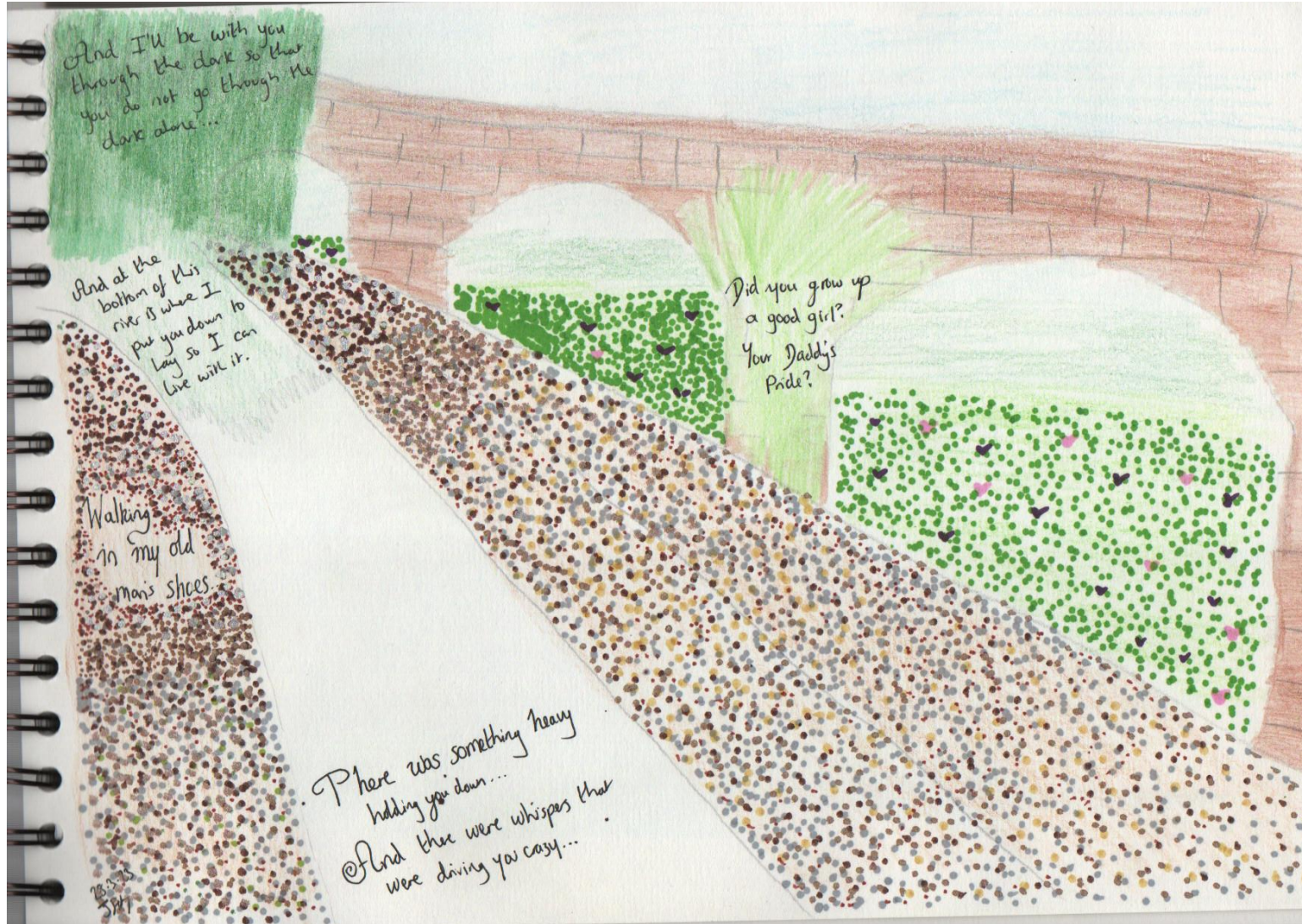
This piece comes with two titles attached. Same song, but representing different feelings. All lyrics from this piece feature on one album: Gaslight Anthem's Sink or Swim. This album was released in 2008 a couple of years before my Dad died, I loved it as soon as I heard it and found myself relating to the lyrics straight away. The chords went straight to the feels in my heart. After my Dad's death, the lyrics took on a different meaning to me. They were already a huge part of my life but they became entangled with all my confused, heartbroken feelings surrounding my Dad. While I can listen to this album without crying, my heart and head are both full of things that I really wish I had told my Dad and I will never be able to tell him. At the same time I know I am able to carry these songs and use them as a comfort when I need to.

I had the urge to create a piece with some sort of garden theme to it. This piece started with light horizontal pencil lines, the green and blue. I had no real plan for it. I put the album on and the first line of the first track is "I took a drive today and I thought about you." That is when I started adding the Sharpie markings; the different greens to create a sort of wild grass effect and the blue horizontal flicks to create a more wild-feeling sky matching the tempo of the songs. The album as a whole is quite raw-sounding and the guitar is very piercing in that wonderful way. The best way I can describe it is "rock-out-able". I drew along with the rhythm of the album until I got to the last track. I added the blue, pink and purple wild flowers during the song "I'da called you Woody Joe". This song is the origin of the title of this piece. The chorus of this song holds the line "Let it out, let it out, let it out, you're doin' alright." This line always brings with it a huge sense of relief. I take permission from this song to let it out because I am doing alright. I firmly believe that these lyrics sum up my feelings in a way that I struggle to verbalise myself.

I loved creating the idea of wildness in this garden piece. My Dad loved his garden. My Mum planted a “Dave tree” in the garden next to the fence where he used to stand and talk to his next door neighbour. It is now taller than he was. When this piece was finished I worried it created a bit of a sensory overload if one looks too closely at it. I even considered splitting this piece into two. However, at the same time I feel like the lyrics and the Sharpie strokes are all related to one big mass of difficult feelings and so if I did try and separate them, I would not know how, or where, to perform the split. Therefore it remains as one wild creation.

#4 Walkin' in my Old Man's shoes

Listen to Wherefore Art Thou Elvis?



This piece started with a sudden memory and evolved when I inadvertently came across a photograph I took a couple of years ago. My Dad was born in 1938 and was evacuated with his brother and sister during the Second World War when he was a baby. They went to Chirk, North Wales. My Mum said that one set of Dad's grandparents lived there as well as his Aunty Em, who I met when I was young. My Dad used to take my big brother and I to Chirk on the train. It was one of my favourite day trips because I loved a train journey, I loved the country, and there was a playground with something to climb on and do somersaults from. I also liked walking along the canal by the aqueduct. He used to tell me stories of different scrapes he got into when he was there. It makes me sad that I cannot really remember them. I have visited Chirk a few times in recent years, visiting with my husband as well as with my nephew and his wife. I like the idea of creating new memories in a place that held so much meaning for older generations in my family.

Once the urge was there to create something based on Chirk, the first thing that came to mind was the aqueduct and canal. I was keen to dot the grass and the cycle path along the canal with Sharpie in order to give the idea of movement of stones and shingle that I remember along the walk. I was quite a clumsy child, many grazed knees in my time so I was always nervous of small stones doing big damage to my knees. I had planned to make the canal as brown and sludgy as I remember it. I was always a little afraid of the canal because I was always warned about how deep and dangerous it was. However, the photograph I took a couple of years ago, the canal looked white, with just a little green reflection from the trees in the distance. I quite liked this so I kept it as that.

The song featured in the link, *Wherefore Art Thou Elvis*, is the origin of “Walkin’ in my old man’s shoes” but it also speaks to me in other ways. The title mentions Elvis and I have a great deal of connections to Elvis Presley; sharing his birthday and loving many of his songs for many years. It also features the lines “Never felt right, never fitted in, walking in my old skin” and “Now I got scars like the number of stars.” While I did not include these lines in this piece, I know they are not far from me. Memories of teen anxiety and spending a large portion of my life feeling like I did not fit in. It is only through experience, therapy and a lot of soul-searching that I have been able to shed this feeling of stigma, and embrace being able to walk in my own skin. I feel like that although there are some painful lyrics attached, it is quite a picturesque photo memory. It feels like a child-like flight of fancy. Obviously I enjoy stomping along the trails he experienced as a child. Literally I am walking where he walked. My friend Catherine was drawn to the position of “Walkin’ in my Old Man’s shoes” was written and thought it looked like a much harder place to walk than anywhere else. I had not considered this, although I really found it to be a difficult path in many ways. I also love the idea of being a source of pride to my Dad as I was growing up; along with the reassurance that even though he is not here, he will still be with me in the dark so that I am not alone; I cannot know these things now. I imagine that he was proud of me and that he stays with me.

I am unsure if I placed the lyric “Did you grow up a good girl? Your Daddy’s pride?” amongst the moss creeping up the aqueduct with conscious intention. I know that I was keen for the moss to be part of the piece and moss holds many multisensory memories for me. The sight and the smell of it reminds me of gardens, holidays, day trips. Since completing this piece I read an article about moss and it talks about how moss is tougher than it looks; it plays a vital role in the development of new ecosystems; and it enables other plants around them to thrive by adapting conditions around them. Having read this I feel like I

have quite an affinity with moss. I talked to my friend Hannah about this and she said “Jill! You are moss!” During my own personal therapy journey I have spent a lot of time talking about how I wonder if my sole purpose is to fix things, be useful, to enable others to thrive, and have struggled with what my identity is besides this. So even though this was not consciously intentional, retrospectively it feels like quite an important part of this piece.

The other two lyrical lines are in the canal. “There was something heavy holding you down...and there were whispers that were driving you crazy...” and “And at the bottom of this river is where I put you down to lay ‘til I can live with it”; these lines hold a great amount of truth. I feel that my grief was an extremely heavy weight on me. I kept many memories buried very deeply for many years until I was able to deal with them. It is only now that I am dealing with these hidden memories.

#5 *I've been holding my breath for too many years to count*

[Listen to Handwritten](#)



Handwritten: despite the fast punk rock tempo, this song features heavily in my grief playlist. The chord progression and speed is very similar to The '59 Sound so even the instrumental introduction stirs up those feelings in my heart that come along with that song. This song needed its own illustration. The first verse and chorus resonate with me and I feel like the lyrics fly vividly around in my head.

My Dad loved cricket. April to September he would take me to the cricket club at the end of our road pretty much every Saturday, and some Sundays too. I tried, but the rules of cricket evaded me. I have mixed feelings about these memories. I liked walking around the pitch, and my Dad would talk to the fielders who were right at the edge of the chalk outlines of the field. At the same time, as much as I tried to understand and enjoy the game as much as my Dad did, it just was not for me. I started bringing books and my Walkman to keep me amused while Dad watched and chatted to his friends. I suppose even as far back as that I was using music to help me navigate through worlds that I did not really understand. Although back then my music of choice was a dance song with fast, complicated lyrics, and a steady heavy beat that I could turn up loud and learn, while tuning out the confusing outside world of cricket.

When creating this piece I knew there would be blue sky. I do not remember a dark sky when I was at the cricket club. This sounds quite idyllic until I remember that you cannot play cricket in the rain so I would only have been there on a sunny day. The sun would reflect on the white wall, making it extremely dazzling. I have memories of peeling off the white paint, revealing yet more white paint. I wonder if I drew lyrics on my own to show a bit of rebellion against this blinding wall. I know I was keen to show the fact that I knew more about the colourful front doors of the Victorian villas, beyond the bright white wall at the other

end of the pitch, than I knew about the cricket field. The fact that I knew the colour of all the front doors leaped out at my husband Craig when I showed him. The multicoloured doors caught my friend Catherine's attention as well. She wondered what the difference was between each house and where the doors led to. Interestingly she also said that, on first look, she either saw a cricket pitch or a fresh grave. I wondered if I intentionally made the house illustrations look a bit childlike. They are young memories and I wonder if this helped build up a sense of my childhood. I think a younger Jill would have tried to create more detailed houses to create prettier, or more accurate shapes. I took comfort in the fact that the shape of the houses did not really matter. The colourful doors mattered, and the houses were a great place to put the lyrics. Obviously logistically, I wanted to split the lyrics between the houses but the way I have done it feels interesting. The terraced villas on the left feel historical, talking about being young. The detached villa in the middle containing the lyrics "I know there's someone out there feeling just how I feel.." creates small feelings of isolation. My friend Hannah worried that it felt like a lonely house, even though it's the dream to not have your neighbours too close. That was before she even read the lyrics over the top. She felt quite sorry for the house but as my friend Catherine pointed out, "it's not connected but it knows the other houses are there." I am unsure if that was intentional but I really appreciated the sentiments after Catherine and Hannah's comments. My friend Gemma saw the houses and thought it was a sea front with rainbow doors and I loved that this came completely from nowhere just reminding me how subjective and wonderful art is.

I think I kept the lyrics off the cricket pitch because I remember how sensitive all the cricket players and fans were about their pitch. It was precious to them, something to be protected and treasured. I have kept it relatively pristine as a tribute those all the

Jill Fitzpatrick

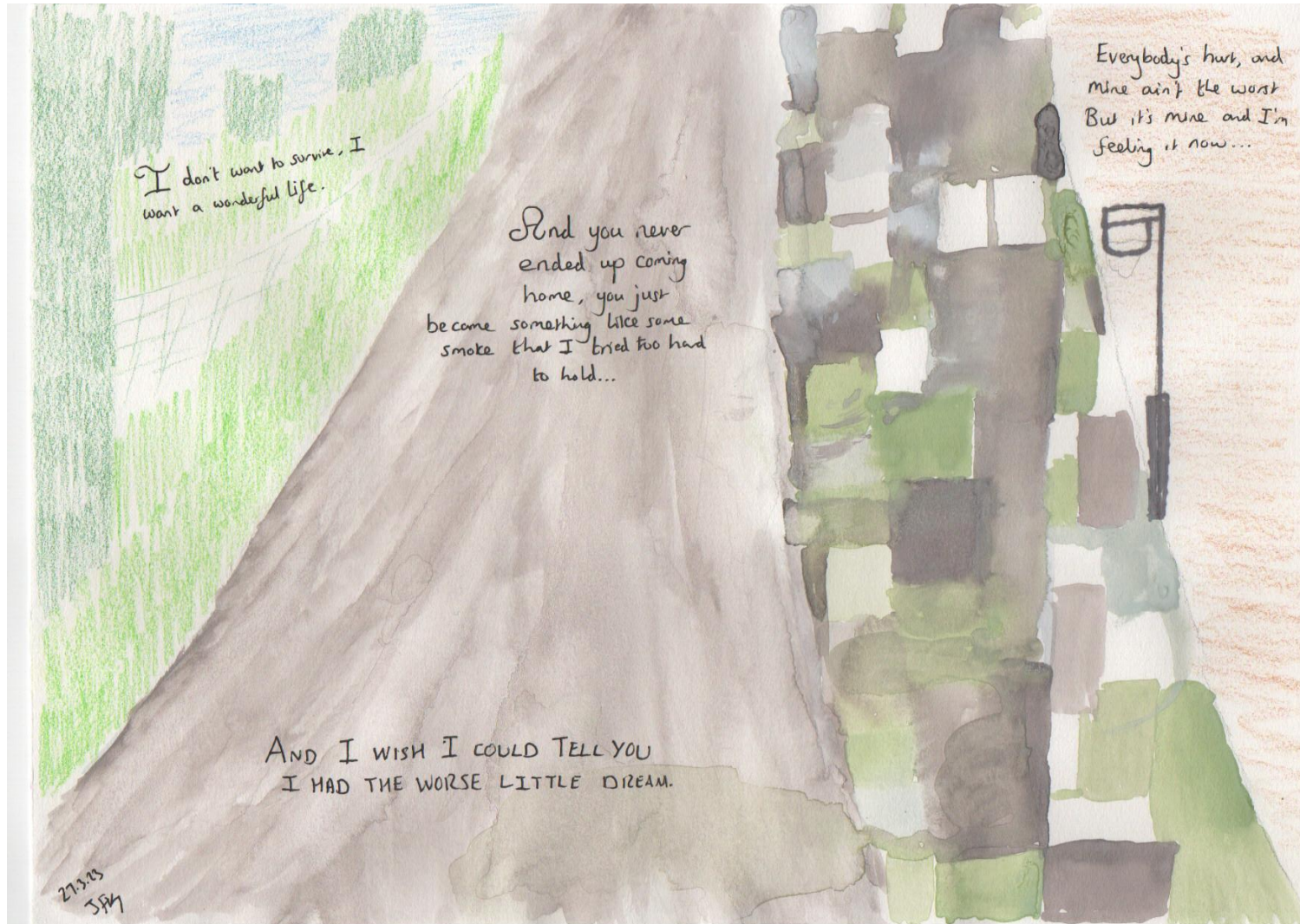
Application Reference Number: 25819178

April 2023

folks at Wavertree Cricket Club who took great pride in their cricket pitch. I have a sensory memory of the smell of freshly cut grass, mixed with piles of older cut grass that used to sit in the corner of the field. It reminded me of being in the countryside.

#6 *Everybody's hurt, and mine ain't the worst but it's mine and I'm feeling it now*

[Listen to Rosemary here.](#)



I created this on the same day as the previous one. This is the view up the road towards my childhood home as you walk up the hill from the cricket ground. Field to the left, dodgy, uneven pavement to the right. The road where my Dad used to meet me on my way home from primary school. I would usually be able to see him wandering down as I was walking along the dirt track that ran alongside Wavertree Cricket Club before I got to the bottom of Long Lane. As I was painting the road and the pavement, the lyrics naturally came to me. The lyrics featured on this piece are from more recent solo Brian Fallon songs.

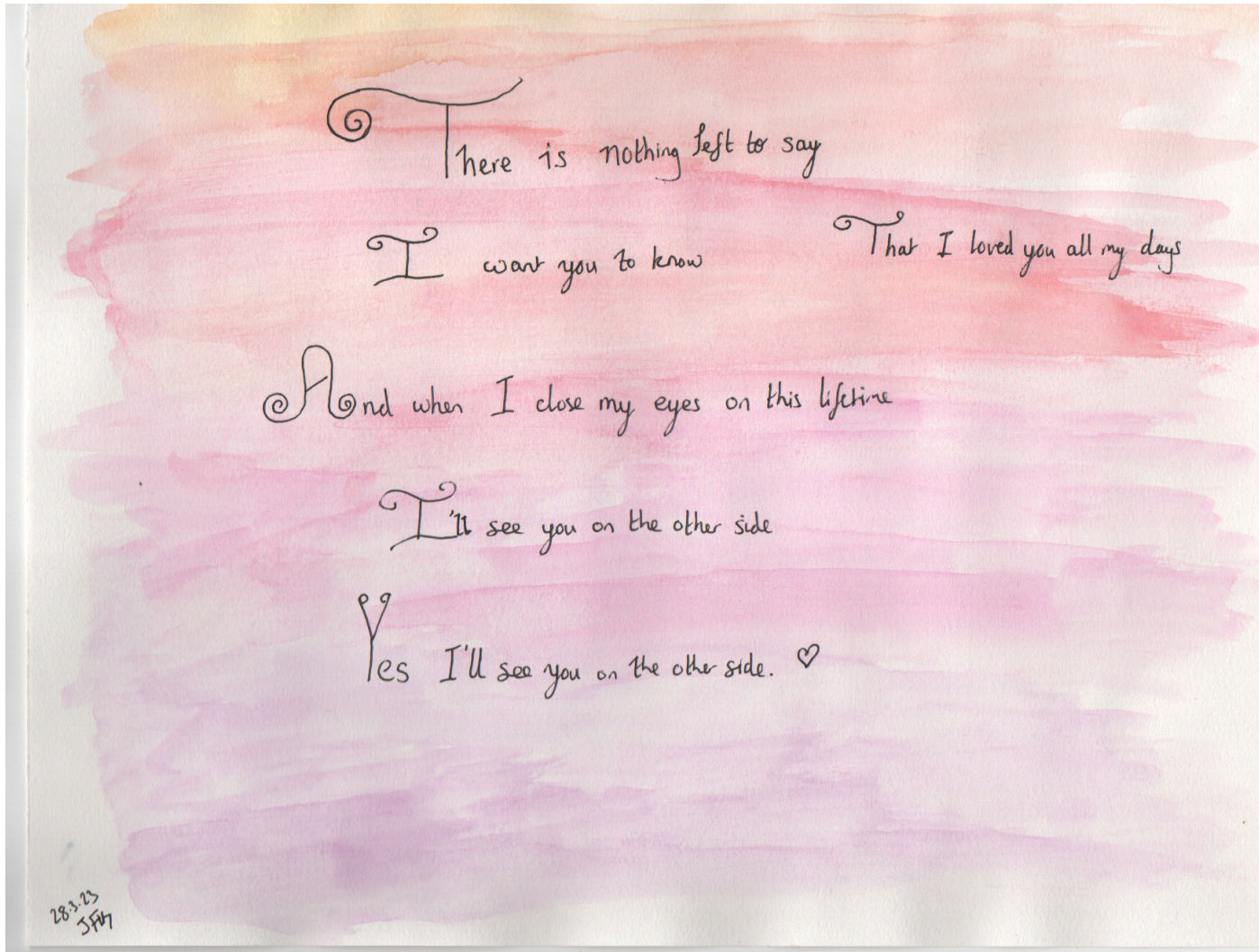
I feel like I wanted to acknowledge that I know that my Dad will never come back; and as much as I wish I could tell him things sometimes I know that I cannot. Both lyrics on the road are from the same song called Smoke. Smoke features heavily in my memories of my Dad. In the literal sense, my Dad was a heavy smoker, my Mum too. My Dad died of lung cancer. I wonder if certain memories I have feel so hazy because they are hard to remember, or if I just grew up surrounded by a general smoke haze. I feel like I wrote both lines on the road because they were two lyrics that I would want my Dad to see as he wandered down the road. In real life there would be houses on the right hand side of this piece. I did not want to get bogged down in trying to create a line of symmetrical semi-detached houses. I did want to keep a lamppost though. Catherine asked me if it was illuminating the importance of feeling the pain. I agreed with her; it feels I have become more accustomed to feeling, and sitting with, the pain that I feel. At the same time it feels like there are many elements of moving on. This felt like more of a “moving on” creation.

I also wanted to add the lyric “I don’t want to survive, I want a wonderful life.” I put it in the field to the left. When I showed Catherine she liked that “the I want a wonderful life part is off the main track like the wonderful life isn’t standard path it’s exciting and unpredictable and unknown because of how green the grass is there compared to the normal dull road. That path to

a wonderful life gives us much more than the standard path ever could.” This felt exactly right to me. As much as I am more open to feeling all the difficult feelings I tried to hide from, I also know that I can acknowledge them but carry on. Life does not have to be solely for existing, it is important to live and create new experiences. I am moving on and I am heading for my wonderful life.

7 *I'll see you on the other side.*

[Listen to See You on the Other Side here.](#)



I heard this song during the morning and it really spoke to me. I decided I did not want to make this a sketch or drawing. In the evening I just put the song back on, grabbed the watercolours and let go. I had no plan or a vague idea for this piece. It felt like it was trying to come from a more peaceful place than some of the other pieces I have created over the last couple of days.

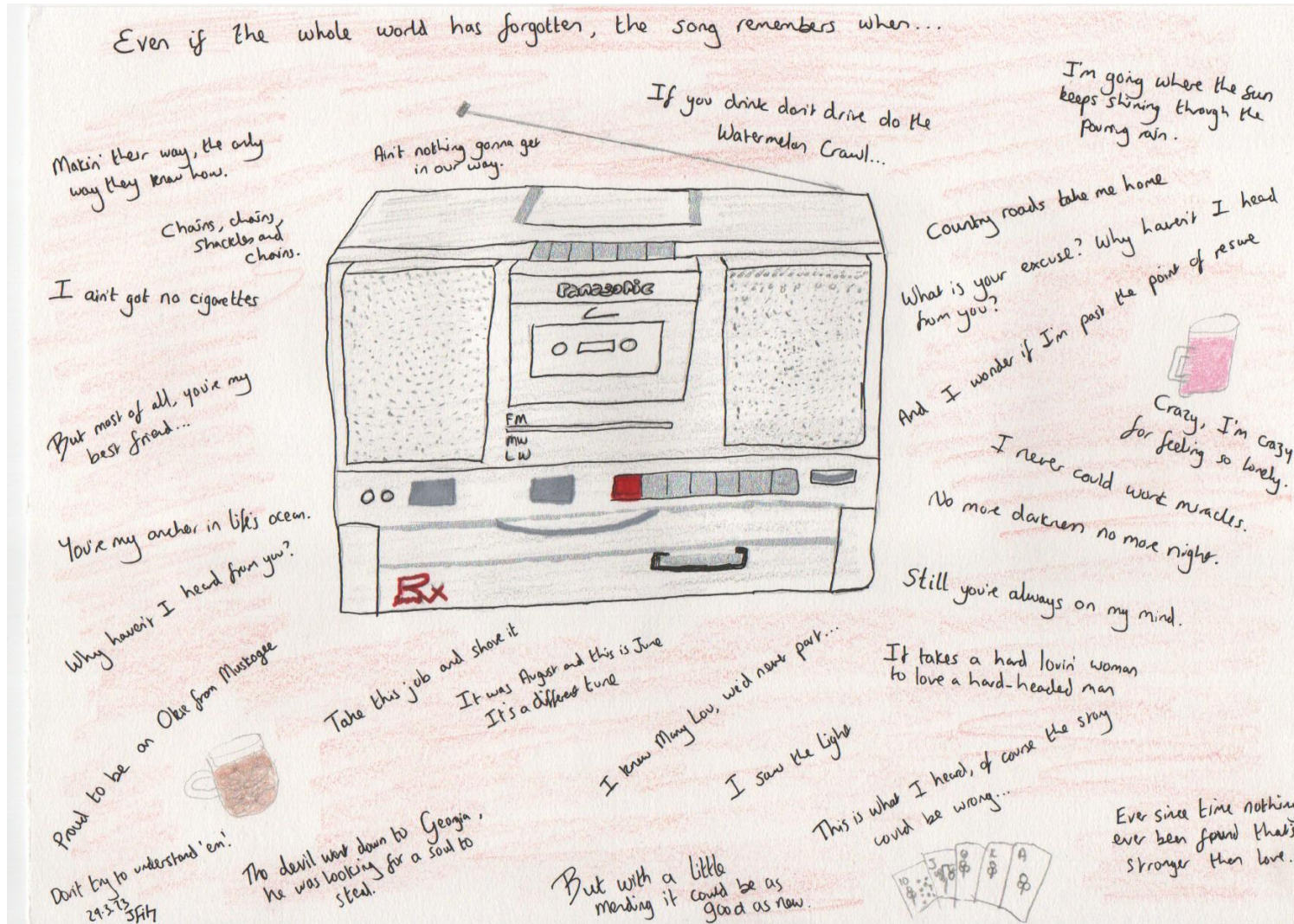
Looking at it now it is dry, it is almost like a warm sunset, and that warmth brings me in. The whole chorus is beautiful but the line “I’ll see you on the other side” stays with me...The size of the lyrics compared to some of the other pieces feels important as well. I feel like if I had the words or had more time, this is something that I would have liked to say to my Dad before he died.

Obviously we do not know what happens at the end. I would like to think a Gospel choir would come and carry me over, and maybe I could hear my favourite song in my final minutes. I would also like to go and join the party with Elvis, David Bowie, Carl Rogers and my Dad. In my ideal scenario they are all friends because my Dad will have had mutual friends with all of them and used that to bond with them all. That is what my Dad always did, something that I try to carry with me. I hope that if I see my Dad on the other side I would be able to share more songs with him. I would like to think that he would be a fan, but he liked what he liked.

This feels like the other side of a set of watercolour bookends with “Ain’t nobody got the blues like me” at the beginning, and this at the end. The song has the gentle tempo of Red at Night, a gentle end to the portfolio. If this portfolio was a concert, this would be the time where the band would go off stage and the fans would call them back for one more song. An encore.

#8 I can guarantee that you're gonna have a ball learning how to do the Watermelon Crawl

[Listen to Watermelon Crawl here.](#)



This was my encore. It felt like a logical conclusion. An epilogue created with fun in mind. I had planned for this piece to be called “The Song Remembers When”, one of my favourite country music tearjerkers but when it was finished and I started reflecting properly, it did not quite feel right. Not a Gaslight Anthem or Brian Fallon song in sight. I have travelled through all the lyrics that I used to express my sadness and grief and I have come full circle to the Panasonic player; surrounded by all the lyrics I remember my Dad singing. I thought this would be the hardest to create. Each of the lyrics featured on this piece have brought a tear to my eye in the past when I heard them. I remember my Dad singing each line so vividly.

I feel like I needed to get this on a page and face it rather than letting it be this unspoken huge monster hiding away in my subconscious. Now that it is out, I absolutely adore it. I remember sitting on the floor next to the Panasonic, which was near the settee where my Dad always sat, his “place”. I learned all the lyrics for my Dad; I also learned how to do The Watermelon Crawl dance. I like to think he appreciated these things. It was my way of bursting into his world. This is why when I came to the final title of the piece, and the corresponding song link, I chose Watermelon Crawl.

I added the little pint of Mild and the playing cards as a bonus tribute to those nights we spent listening to music because there was “nothing on the telly!” I also added another glass. This is a glass of...undetermined. It might be a very pink Vimto, I also enjoyed making “mixture drinks” which was a comforting childhood staple, it might have been that. Mixture drinks involved basically everything in the cupboard, creating mad colours and mixes. Catherine wondered if it was Pepto Bismol, like it might be a medicine to help forget. I am uncertain but love the mystery and the fact it brings with it different interpretations.

Jill Fitzpatrick

Application Reference Number: 25819178

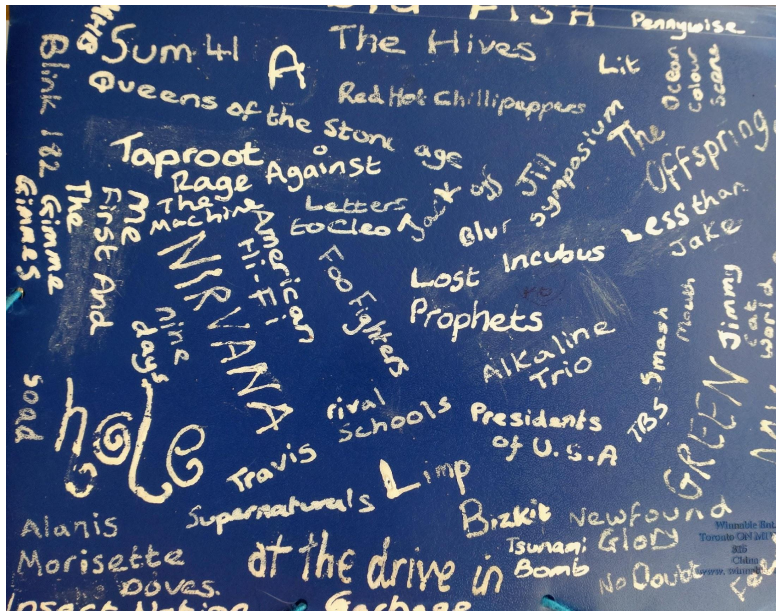
April 2023

This time around I only felt joy. I was not even bothered by the fact that my drawing of the Panasonic is quite jaunty. In fact I quite like how floaty it is, like it is dancing along with the music. I believe this is something that my Dad would like as well therefore I cannot think of a better way to end my own collection.

What does it feel like inside? Does it hurt you at night? Or does it keep you alive and set you on fire?

Art with others

While it is true that “ain’t nobody got the blues like me”, my love of history and people’s stories inspired me to reach out to my friends and see what they thought about music, art and lyrics. I told them to think of it as a mental health exercise. I found this intriguing because even though we mostly grew up separately, we shared similar experiences, thoughts and feelings. I adored everyone’s contributions and notes.

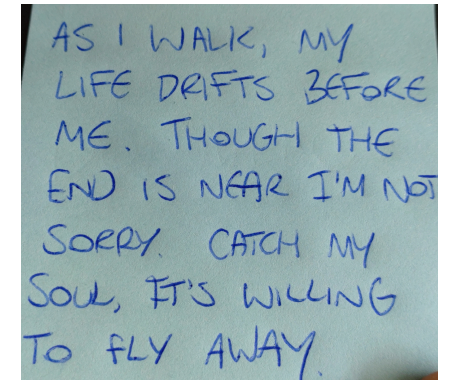


An historical snapshot of my own teen years. My drum music folder from when I was 15. It started with my friend Roon putting Hole, A, Nirvana, The Offspring, Green Day and At The Drive In. It was Roon who introduced me to many of these bands. She also had beautiful writing. I took it to a whole new level, adding every single band I loved...plus a little tribute to Bill Bailey in the form of “Insect Nation” because I had heard his song about insects and LOVED IT.

Craig making Iron Maiden history

Were you a teenage lyric doodler?

"I had all the lyrics to Hallowed be thy Name on my history folder. It was a big folder."



AS I WALK, MY
LIFE DRIFTS BEFORE
ME. THOUGH THE
END IS NEAR I'M NOT
SORRY. CATCH MY
SOUL, IT'S WILLING
TO FLY AWAY.

"Think it was for the shock value. Plus we had Dahlstrom and he didn't care. He taught me about JFK and Hitler."

Hannah and her Black Parade Reflections

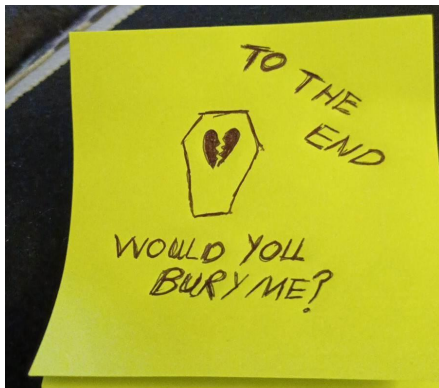
"I can't even draw as well as the kids drew me today. Like the lines never go where they're supposed to? I have no creative vision but I don't know if that's a symptom of not being arty or if that's part of it."

If there were no strings attached or pressure, would you doodle?

"I don't really doodle, if I'm like in uni I'll colour in corners? Maybe a love heart? A child style flower? But that would only be if I was SCARY bored in a lecture and wanted to move."

What if there were no rules for where the lines were supposed to go?

“There is though isn’t there? Like if you’re drawing a person I can’t get the legs the same size and stuff?”



“I did used to be able to draw a good coffin when I was a proper emo. With a lil broken heart next to it haha. Maybe some My Chemical Romance lyrics scrawled nearby. I say a good coffin, I don’t mean 3D, I mean the top of one.”

“I wish mine was scrawled all cool but it wasn’t because my dyspraxic arse can’t do that either!”

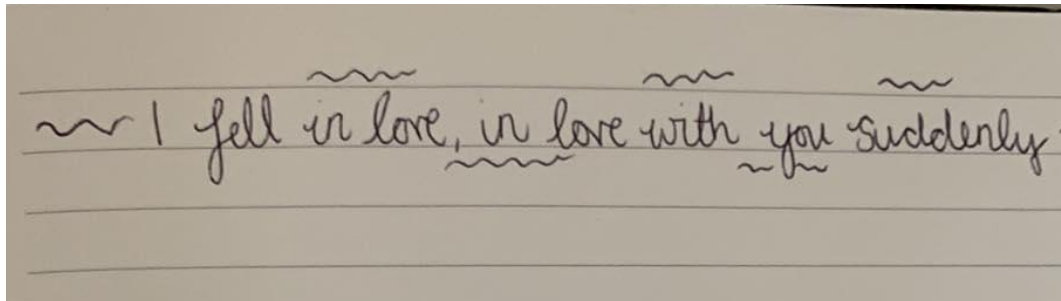
“I was 14 and STUFF HURT OKAY!”

“My nan was 100% the catalyst to my emo phase...it wasn’t just boys and body worries haha but it was 100% that too. My Mum and Dad split up the day before my nan died too if that’s valid...it’s probably valid isn’t it? Haha!”

Georgina and her great romance

Did you scrawl lyrics on your school books back in the day?

"I distinctly remember my orange English book on the back of the book having Hellogoodbye in your arms across the top. I fell in love, in love with you suddenly. With like lil swirls all round it."

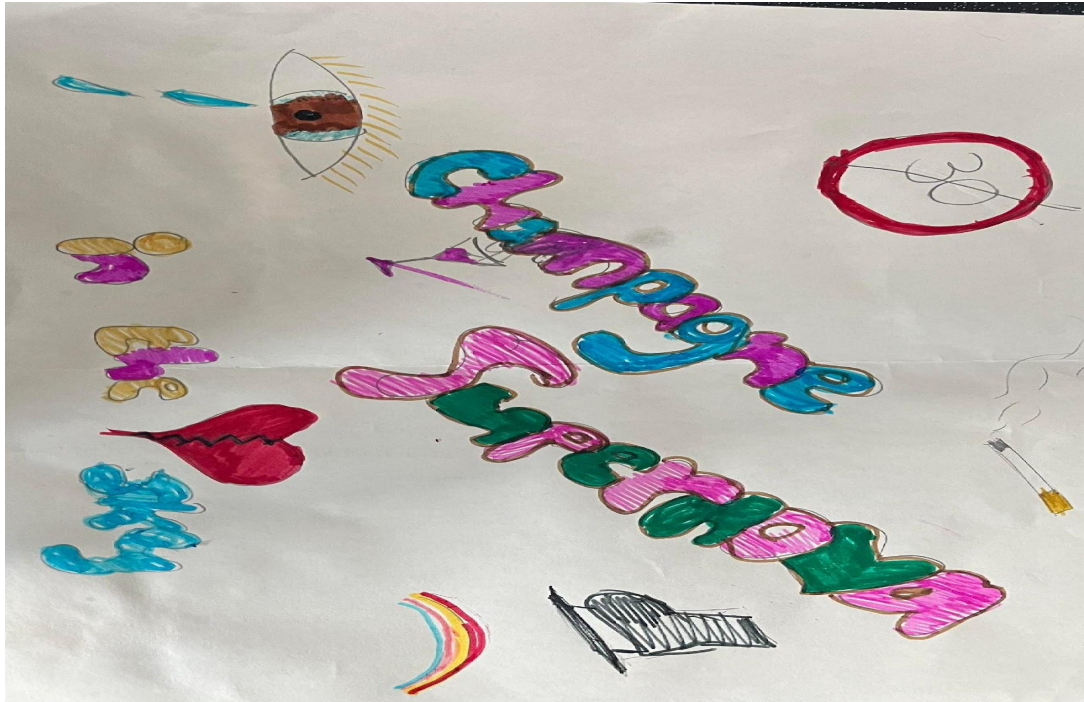


"That's kind of what it was like but each word was written in different coloured gel pen because of course it was."

Can you remember why, in particular, that line?

"Because I thought I was in the greatest romance of my lil 12 year old life. And we danced to that song at the disco when we went to Wales with the school. What a random memory, awww. Haven't thought about that for years! It was also on my MSN messenger status."

Clare and her epic song



What does Champagne Supernova mean to you?

"It is very sentimental it was played at the very first funeral I went to, a friend from my class who was ran over outside school. He knocked me over while ice skating hence the ice boot."

How did it feel?

"I felt really overwhelmed doing it all the emotions came flooding back and memories of things I'd forgotten about. Quite surreal activity. I was unsure what to do and then when I got to the paper it just flowed. I loved it."

Alex served with Sade



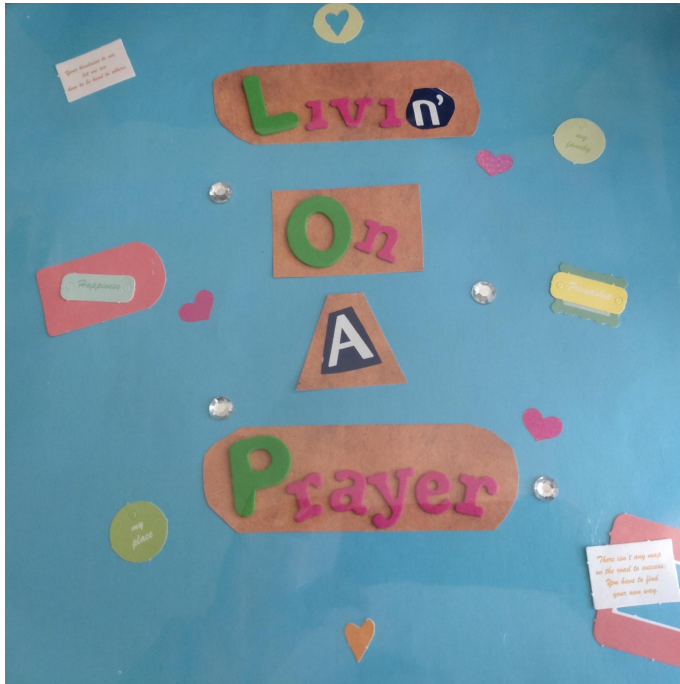
How did you feel as you did it?

“It was lovely actually. Honestly I enjoyed it more than I expected to. I was thinking about the lovely memory, I suppose it brought it to life more vividly...because I was thinking about the specific details.”

What was it about the lyric that made you want to draw it?

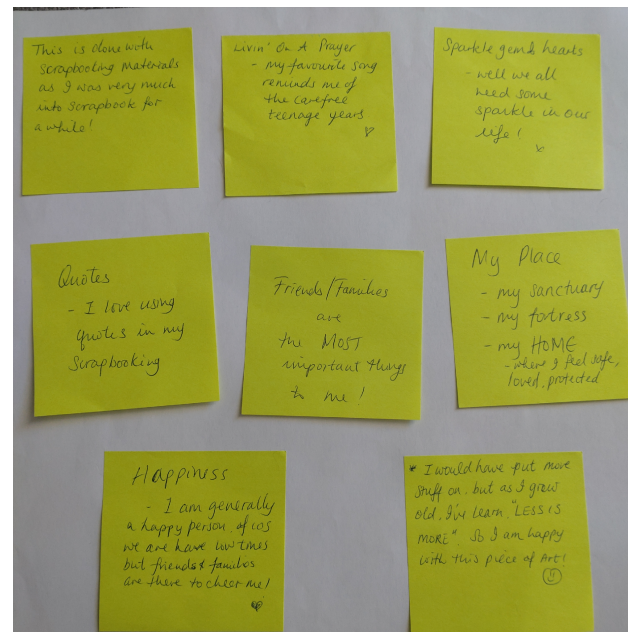
“Well honestly I did consider some others that had very vivid memories attached but they weren’t entirely positive. They weren’t unhappy memories, just more ambiguous. So I wanted to put my energy into a pure, happy memory.”

Bonnie livin' on her prayer

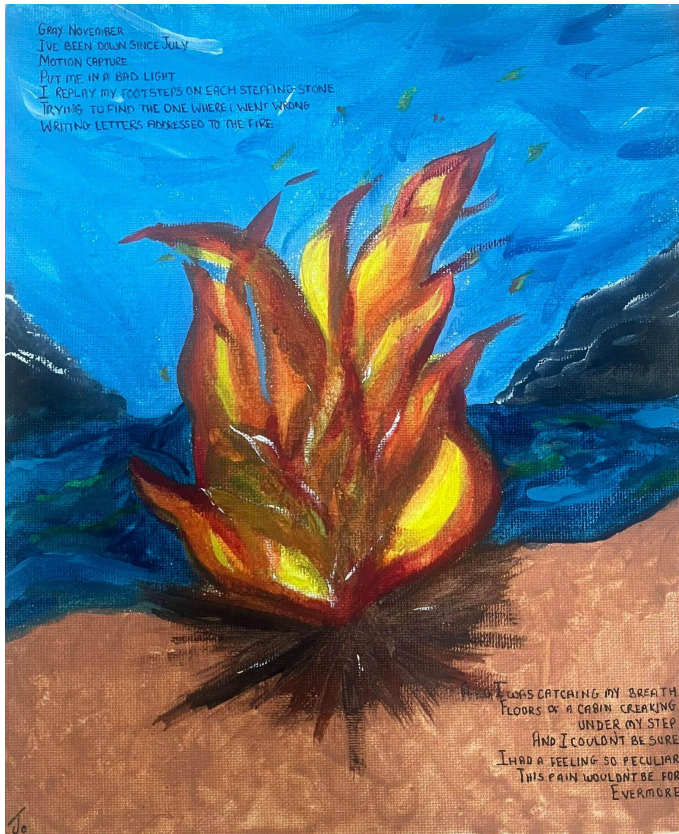


“Songs that I love with memories. My favourite song is Livin’ on a Prayer because it reminds me of my carefree teen years, whenever it comes on, I will not care I don’t know the full lyrics, I will just get up and dance and scream out the chorus!! I did that when we were on a ride in Alton Towers, when John said he thought the safety bar was loose, but I keep singing as if I didn’t care anything would happen; I told John I would die happy if I was belting out that song.”

“I had the idea of using magazine/ paper cuttings!! That reminded me of the teen years, where that’s what we do, magazines cutting letters and the posters of bands on our bedroom walls!”



Jordan and her extra Evermore



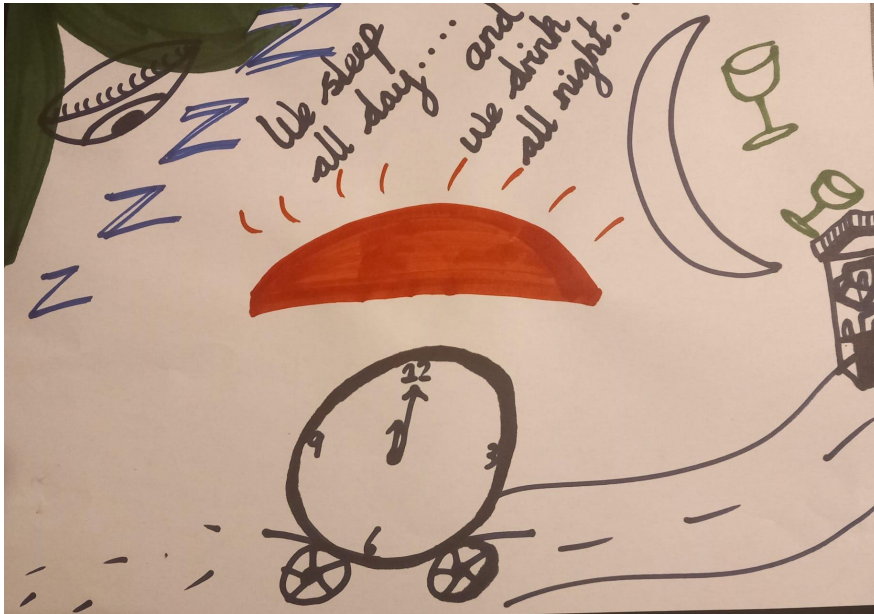
"We know I'm extra and also a saddo with nothing to do this weekend."

I've chosen Evermore by Taylor Swift because the lyrics mean a lot to me. The song was released during a Covid lockdown when I felt very lonely, isolated and had a lot of feelings and thoughts to work through. The song ends by stating that pain isn't forever."

"Usually I find painting relaxing and it helps to zone out thoughts and the pressures from daily life. When painting this, I thought of how far I'd come since I first heard this song. I'd become more independent, found hobbies that I enjoyed, moved jobs to somewhere I felt valued and became more confident."

"I still experience pain but I know it's not forever and I think of all the things I've overcome and it makes me proud of the person I am now."

Emer and Vinnie drinking all night



Were you a teenage lyric doodler?

“No I wasn’t really a doodler back then.”

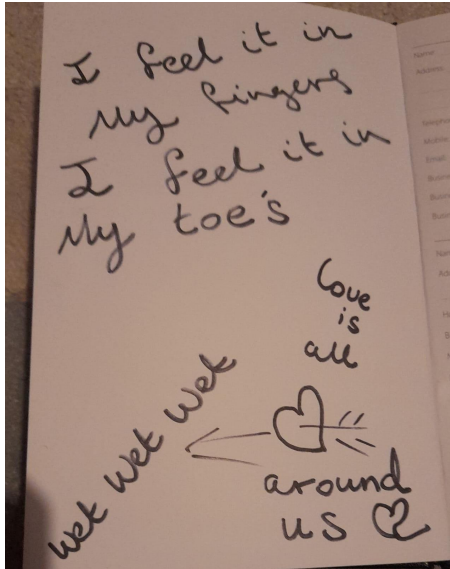
What song sticks out to you?

“The song that comes to my mind is San Diego song by The Coronas. I was on a night out with my uni friends and meeting my then boyfriend, now husband. It was the last song they played and it was such an idealic (sic) moment with my friends and about to see Vinnie.”

“Drawing the lyric brought that night back. It made me remember how we danced and the laughs we had. And the happy feeling I had. It put me right back there.”

“Let me show you my sister’s. We’re loving the musical memories.”

Angela and Emer's antics with their mother



"Fond memories of a talent show trying not to laugh as they got all the words wrong and danced way too enthusiastically my sister and mother and me not successful containing the laughter."

And maybe we believed in very very foolish things. Maybe these songs kept us breathing another tomorrow

I loved doing this exercise with everyone I tried it with. The aspect that stayed with me the most was that it did not even take much convincing for these stories to come. I tried to keep it as flexible as possible, with each individual leading the way. I love each creation and reflection. I also found it so interesting that many of them had common themes. Similar experiences, the happiness and the hurt. I would love to take the time to dig deeper into each story. I think that even those with art worries enjoyed the lyrical aspect of this exercise. This just goes to show that this kind of art is for everyone and can be helpful, healing, and fun.

And it travels from heart to limb to pen...

Final Thoughts.

So concludes my portfolio. The idea came from my heart, travelled down my limb and into my pencil/paintbrush/Sharpie. It has been hard to let go of how raw the pieces have felt at times; no perfect symmetry, and not a “perfectly drawn” item in sight. That was not what this collection needed to be. I took a collection of songs with beautiful lyrics and I used them to sum up my feelings and collect some blurry memories. As Brian Fallon said about his own songs “I don’t want to tell what the songs are about for me, because then people can’t decide for themselves, which is why I write; it’s for you to find your own meaning in. For me it’s my story, for someone else it is theirs.” I will be forever grateful to Brian Fallon and the guys in The Gaslight Anthem. Their words helped me process my grief in a way I have never been able to verbalise; and have helped me create a bridge between my deepest darkest feelings and the real world. A gift that I will never take for granted. Music connects people and can aid and influence

one's grief and mourning (Thacker, 2022) and I have learned that art therapy can aid in safely exploring the underlying feelings that are tied up with grief and loss (Golan and Leichtentritt, 2016). Self-reflection has aided me in my catharsis and I have been so fascinated and humbled by other people's interpretations and reactions to my pieces. It enabled me to step back from what I had created and appreciate what other people could see, even if their interpretations were different to, and often way more complex than, my own original ideas. Sometimes they noticed things that I had created somewhat unintentionally and this was so interesting to then reflect on afterwards. I am immensely proud of what I have been able to create in the last week and I have loved how cathartic it has been. I am happy to say that I like art, and I think art likes me.

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