

**Tell
Your
Story**

A collection of work from **Tell Your Story**

Good Days Start the Day Before

Visit to the gym, resistance training, hair goes curly.

Dog out for a wee, dog walk, ticking things off my tick list.

Get up when I get up, leisure centre, friends, see what happens.

Care farm, looking after animals: four goats, five chickens and rabbits.

Poppies Pantry - all you need.

Bob Dylan rings you up, write a song together; trumpet solo.

Tinker about with radio-controlled cars and boat, kite-jumping, cooking for a friend.

Perfect cup of builder's tea, nice cup,
Cold tea is unacceptable to me.

Perfect day is a Wednesday, go to the quay, do art, chat and chill.

Finish a writing piece, nailing a song on the piano.

List-free, go with the flow, probably a Sunday. Full fry -up, childcare provided.

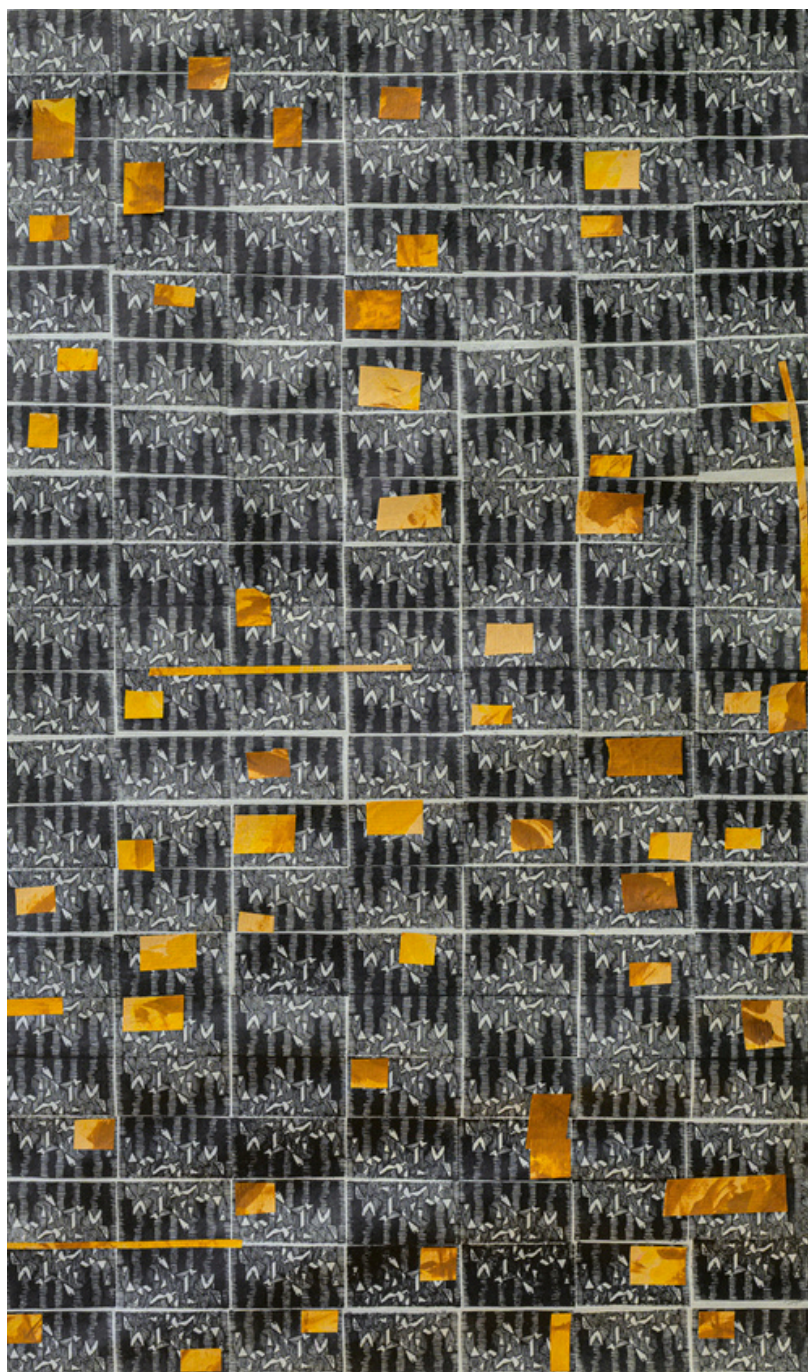
Exercise bike, off for a walk.

Plan a breakfast the day before, tastes so good.

Exercise, running, day unfolds, join as many groups as I can.
Take it all as it comes.

If the sun is shining, I know it's going to be a good day -
Fitting in things for me.

A Morning Group Poem



Really gave me a haven.
I've not had this kind of haven.
It's really good.
I've been able to think - it's very nice.
It was something to be here.
It gave me space to start painting again
with meaning.
It has been amazing.
It's amazing what they do for you -
The space helped me to create,
Space is what I needed -
It's something I've never had before.
It helped me because I feel accepted.

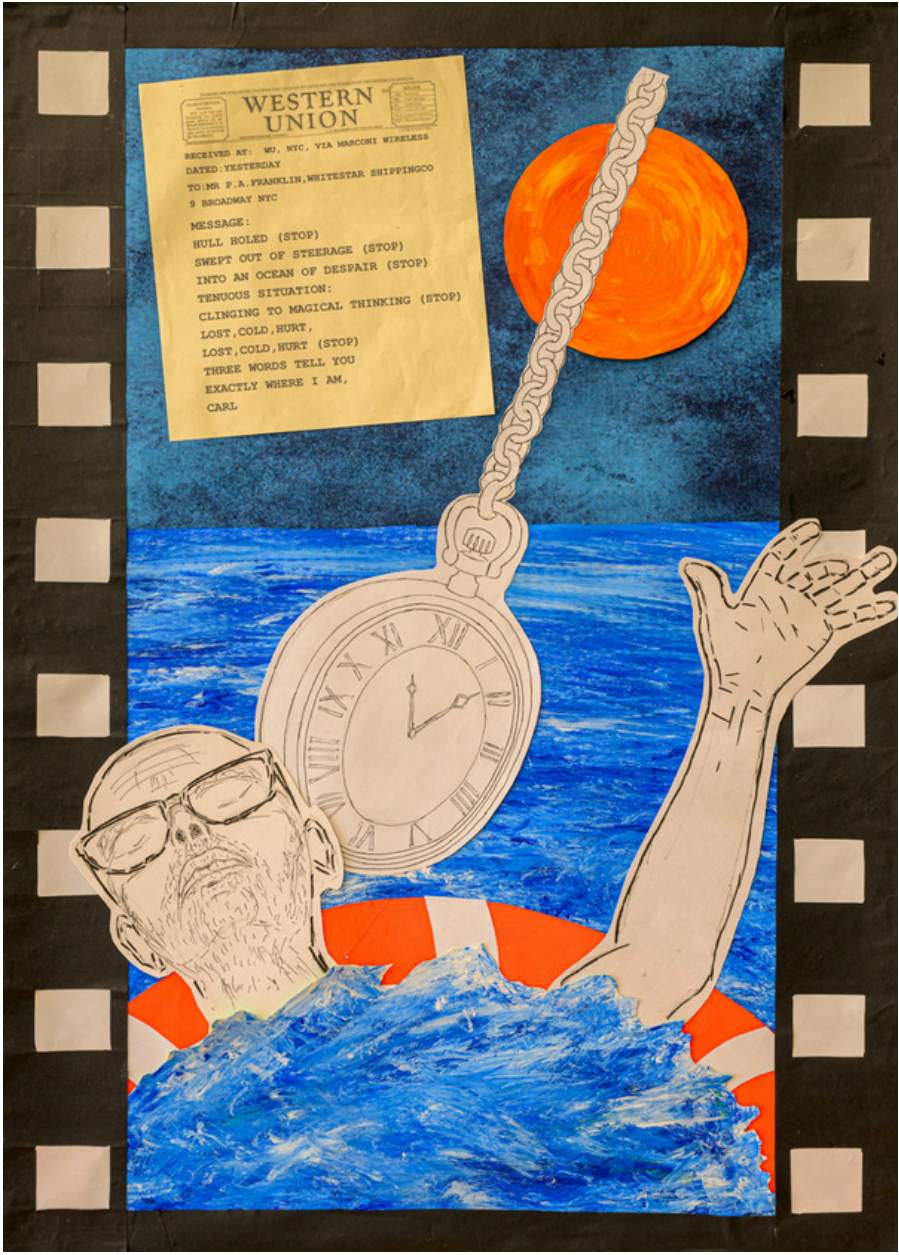
Claudia

WESTERN UNION

RECEIVED AT: NYC, NYC, VIA MARCONI WIRELESS
DATED: YESTERDAY
TO: MR F.A. FRANKLIN, WHITESTAR SHIPPING CO
9 BROADWAY NYC

MESSAGE:

HULL HOLED (STOP)
SWEEPED OUT OF STEERAGE (STOP)
INTO AN OCEAN OF DESPAIR (STOP)
TENUOUS SITUATION:
CLINGING TO MAGICAL THINKING (STOP)
LOST, COLD, HURT,
LOST, COLD, HURT (STOP)
THREE WORDS TELL YOU
EXACTLY WHERE I AM,
CARL



This mind is a poor judge:
It speaks before being spoken to;
Says this is one thing;
Then says it is another.
It arouses emotions
That cloud reason,
And make us run from ourselves
In the wrong direction,
Or hide in a small cupboard of
indecision.

Oh, mind, with your thoughts,
Explain yourself:
Where do your thoughts come from?
And who is thinking them?

Carl



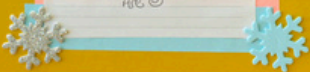
THEY DO BELIEVE IN
LGBT RIGHTS



TRANS
BEAUTIFUL



Freedom
Is Found When We
Let Go
Of Who
We're Supposed To Be
And Embrace
Who We
Really
Are ☺



From The
Fire
Comes
New Life

EVIE

Hiding me
or finding Me.
The three phases of me
The three faces of me

Here I begun as a young boy
not knowing but knowing
I was different,
but I couldn't say,
Perhaps I couldn't articulate?

Young Evie began
Explosive tantrums
19 years old hiding at home
Playing with dresses
Seeing my beauty
But not showing anyone.

Adult Evie
This is me now
Who am I?
I don't know yet
But I am beginning to find out.

Evie

Tigger is bouncy and loads of fun when you
Are around him you never feel glum he is
A big sappy tigger with a kind heart and
When you are with him you will never fall
Apart. He is full of love and hugs all year
Through just call on him and he will get you
through

Tracey

I Love to Swim, Run, Dance and Sing!



1970s - 80s
 Just a Silly Sociable boy, who couldn't keep his thoughts to himself

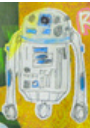
Ipswich Swimming Club
 Westbourne High School
 Ipswich
 Stephen Topple
 Attainment [A] Effort [3]
 Name: could question Stephen's enthusiasm towards his work. A simple homophone as it he founded in as a complete novel with accompanying "background" that has some 1500 words, a consistently high standard of writing, a well-structured and well-organized program. He works hard and appears to enjoy it!

Stephen Topple
 - Created in 1972

& "Virtually Unique"



Made 4 Beautiful, Clever, Kind, Sensible Kids.
 How'd I do that?
 All At or did Uni? Proud



STAR WARS

The Original ones '77-83

- Boyhood in the late 70s
 May the FORCE be with You



Free Period? PUB! classes '92

There's one thing I can say about Stephen, it's that he's kept me entertained since he was a second year. His genuine sense of humour spills over into all aspects of his work. He has produced some superb work during this year.



I don't watch TV, but I love movies



Action & Adventure
 LOGAN RUN



Smart Street Art + Design College - from 1990
 - AWESOME Times!
 "I know hung f..."

Dojo Kun
 義 修 礼 制 誠
 Karate for Defence only! (Karate Kid 1984)

- Dance Like No-one's watching
- Sing like no-one's listening
- Treat others as you would like to be treated yourself
- If you can't say something nice, don't say nothing at all
- Look after each other
- Don't spend time with people who aren't kind to you

Favourite Mid 80s Game



Donkey Kong - Air Hockey - Pin Ball - G'n'O

Felix stowe Beach Hut - Every weekend, & Every opportunity
 Winning Sea Swim - Arcade - French Cricket



My eldest daughter in a recent photo
 Shows Papa in 1993
 S. Topple '25



Tell Your Story

Tell your story,
what a group.
Could you find a more goofy troupe?

Eclectic, talented, beautiful, kind,
A better bunch would be hard to find.

Is it easy? No it's not,
But it reminds me of feelings I'd maybe forgot.

Yes I've spoken and been upset,
But in hindsight I don't feel regret.

There's not much worse than feeling alone,
That's no surprise, hold the phone.

It's not my intention to lower the tone,
And sound like I'm self pitying or having a moan.

The group have really picked me up,
Having a chat and a joke, helps me know what's up.

It sets me up for the day,
Even the week,
Being with some other crazies,
Makes me feel less of a freak.

We're not out of date, or obsolete,
Everyone of us is special. And unique.

Steve

The presences
of a butterfly,
How gentle,
and fragrant they seem.
Gently fluttering,
on a calm summer day,
Flashing life,
a dream.

that softly,
Here time is over,
Nearly before
it begins.
So enjoy
your special moments,
Call a butterfly,
It's life now.



SHERYL TREE OF LIFE



Though you be the
little, the in
flame!
I'll remember you in time.

Butterfly
Flutter flutter butterfly,
see her wings sparkle in the sky
Flutter flutter butterfly,
see her pass you by
Flutter flutter pretty butterfly,
see her rook in the air
Oh butterfly... I see you there.



I love to ice skate in the winter breeze
With tinkling lights all around me.
Children singing and dancing with joy,
Happy faces pass me by.

Sheryl

I had no idea how much coming to the Tell Your Story sessions would help me.

At my first session, we talked about remembering old photos and I thought of one of myself and my sister when we were very small. I'm older so I've always tried to look after her. This thought triggered me and I began feeling quite low. My sister and I have been having a difficult relationship over the last year and have stopped communicating with one another. I've tried to reconcile but my efforts were rejected.

Through listening to others in the group, their stories and quotes, I have been encouraged to put my own wellbeing first and I decided to step away to sit with my loss and to focus on putting myself first.

It's been very difficult but I'm starting to see the light at the end of the tunnel.

Tricia



Tell your story full of grace,
Of caring hands and warm embrace.
A mother's kindness helps me rise -
A growing tree beneath your skies.

We are little branches, see,
Growing on our big, strong tree.
Leaves of kindness, fruit so sweet,
Help us make our story complete.

We spin and wiggle, jump and play,
Showing the world our own bright way.
Our trunk is strong, roots grow deep,
Holding us safe when storms may sweep.

Branches sway and leaves spin round,
Our stories grow up from the ground.
Leaves of courage, fruit of cheer,
We tell our story far and near!

Storms may blow, clouds may frown,
but the Tree of Life lifts us up, not down.
Be yourself, and you will see,
EVERYONE BELONGS IN THE TREE!

Your care becomes the seeds they keep,
Your kindness roots in places deep.
Each child you touch will someday be,
A forest shaped by your kind tree.

Becky

CAROL PARKER

THE FAMILY

THE FAMILY IS NICE TO HAVE NEW HELPERS
IN REASON WHY WE COME TO HELP THEM
WE GO TOGETHER THAT'S WHAT LIFE
IS ABOUT WE ALL GO OUT TOGETHER
YOU CARE FOR THE LOVED ONES THAT SURROUND
WE CARE FOR EVERYBODY LIKE THE FISH

FAMILY

THE FISH THINK IS
SO NICE AND SO RELAXING
HE BRING A LOT OF JOY
TO ALL THE GREAT BOYS



TO SNOW COME
THE SNOWMANS IS PUT TOGETHER
THE HOT DRINKS ARE HERE
IF VERY COLD THIS TIME
OF YEAR.
THE CHILDREN ALL AROUND
TO LOOK AT WITH WE DID
IS BRING TO JOY OF THE SHOW
IS THE ONLY WAY TO GO.

FISH ARE GOOD
FISH ARE BETTER
YOU LOOK AT THEM
TO HELP YOU RELAX
LOOK NICE IN THE HOME
WHEN YOU ARE ALONE



A CIRCLE OF LOVE
IN SPRING HAS BEEN
IN EACH OTHER AND BEING
THERE FOR ONE ANOTHER
NO MATTER WHAT IS
SOMETHING WE ALL NEED ALL
THE TIME.



A circle of love
Inspiring and believing
In each other and being
there for one another
no matter what
is something we all need all the time.

Carol



Like Bright Colours Everywhere

The rainbow in the sky,
and the various greens of the trees

The vibrant colours of the flowers,
golden yellow sands and the clear blue sea

The blue water glistening as the bright
yellow sun shines on, and the ducks swim by.

The sound of squirrels scurrying as they
search for brown nuts nearby

The children's laughter as they play in
the colourful leaves and bright red slide

Absurd

I stitched myself with spaghetti
noodles looping through my ribs,
gluing pieces with bubblegum
patchy smiles with yesterday's news
Heart repaired with a melted clock
Skin crinkled, torn like candy wrappers
stitches hammered with jelly beans
Sew me sideways -
a master piece of destinys thread

Heather

Should I apologise for a life of trouble. Beg forgiveness to an unknown god or mother.

We'd all be on our knees all day long. Perhaps that's where we're going wrong.

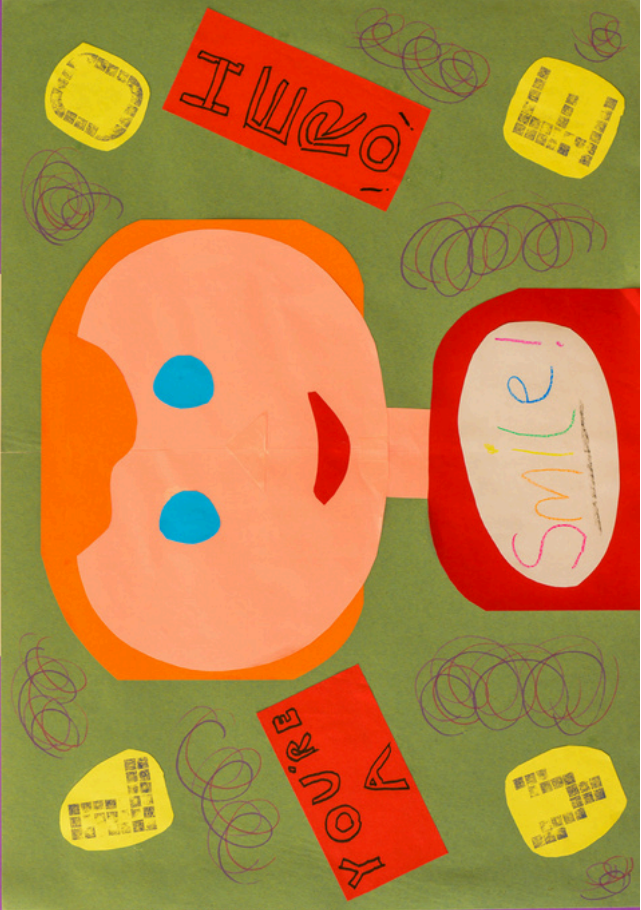
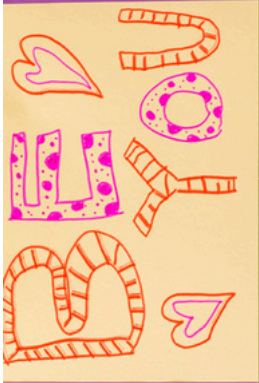
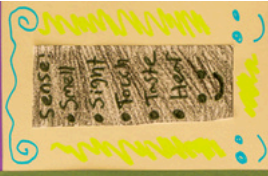
Apologise for an error in judgement as if I am the first to wander in this wilderness.

Say sorry for the fun? The parties, the art, the sex. Fuck no. Have fun.

A good time can be all that's left.

Yes. I can only say sorry for the love I didn't give but should. The patience not found on this stony ground.

Brendan



Our Space

In our little club where bright minds play,
A patchwork of people meets each day.
From all walks of life, from far and near,
We gather with stories we're eager to hear.

An artist with paints on their wandering hands,
A writer who builds whole shimmering lands,
A dreamer who sculpts what the heart dares to show,
a singer whose melodies blossom and glow.

We conjure up creatures and worlds yet unseen,
We laugh over ideas both wild and obscene.
In this cosy circle, we're more than we seem,
A found-family woven from whispers of dream.

So here's to the stories we've yet to explore,
To the voices that tremble but dare to roar,
For this space is a place where all souls can be free,
United by creativity's boundless sea.

Connor

Childhood Photo

To the child with the blonde hair wearing a bonnet.
Life will go by quicker than you know it.

In your grandparents' garden were the simpler times.
As you smiled with the sun in your eyes.

About 28 years later and so much has changed.
That home may be gone now, but the memories
remained.

I'm 33 years old now but I hope I never lose sight
of that same childhood whimsy and those simple
delights.

To My 26 Year Old Self

I know that you're confused and full of fear.
That's just life now, didn't you hear?
I'm 33 years old and thought I lost myself
Cause at 26 years old a lot went wrong with your
health.

But I feel no anger towards you because you didn't
know
And without all those troubles we would never grow.
And I'm sorry that it never got 100% better
But I understand now, why we were under the weather.

You can't see it just yet but you will in 2025
Cause after all that chaos you're working hard at life.
So I forgive you for all the times we spent inside
You wanted safety, and you needed to hide.



Dolphins are coming
to see me with their
Smiling faces

Focus ON WHAT
you CAN DO!

When the Dark Tried to Take Me

I think about how it hurts to live,
how every breath can feel like broken glass,
how the smallest tasks weigh
like oceans stacked on my ribs.

I think about the nights I lay
in a cave of my own mind,
the wind howling through my hollow places,
the rain tapping its questions against my skull,
the storm inside me louder
than anything outside.

I think about how close I came
to stepping off the edge—
how the dark whispered my name
as if it knew me better than I knew myself.

I thought I had lost my laughter,
my light,
my purpose,
my voice.
I thought I was nothing but a shell
moving through days that didn't want me.

But then—
a flicker.
A fragile, trembling spark
that refused to die
Hope, too small to see,
but big enough to feel
like a warm fingertip
pressing into my palm.
Stay.
It said.
Just stay.

And so I did.

I stayed for the possibility
that tomorrow might hurt less.
I stayed for the sunlight
that sometimes slipped through
the cracks in my cave.

I stayed for the version of me
I hadn't met yet—
the one who fought,
the one who loved,
the one who was lost
but still findable.

I stayed,
and somewhere along the way
I realized a quiet truth:

My thoughts are not facts.
My darkness is not destiny.
My pain is not proof
that I am broken beyond repair.

Living can be ugly,
unfair,
and exhausting—
but hope has a stubborn habit
of reaching for your hand
even when you're too tired
to reach back.

So to you who reads this:
I know the weight,
I know the storm,
and I know the silence.
But I also know this—
you are not alone in the dark.
You are not wrong for struggling.
And no matter how hard it gets,
there is a spark inside you
that refuses to be extinguished.

When you think you can't carry on,
hope will find you.
When you think you've lost yourself,
you can still be found.

And when the dark tries to claim you—
you, too, can decide to stay.
You, too, can choose the light
again and again
and again.

Sarah

Fleeting Meetings

A wee walk with Billy Connolly

Bring over Eddie Murphy, take him round London,
take him to the dungeons.

Set up market stalls with David Jason to sell gold
watches, suitcases from the van.

Fish and chips down the beach with Sheridan Smith.

Meet my paternal grandfather, see what he was
like.

Meet Elizabeth Sladen and Jinx Monsoon, shake
them both by the hand.

Sally Grindley in a bookshop, chat about our
favourite book.

Go round and round on a carousel with Dick Van
Dyke.

An Afternoon Group Poem

A collection from ***Tell Your Story***, a social prescribing creative wellbeing project, produced by The New Wolsey Theatre and led by artists, Dean Parkin and Sarah Nkugwa.

With special thanks to
NHS Suffolk and North East Essex
Our creative and pastoral assistant, Eva Balding
Our Volunteer Assisant, Claire Courteney
Everyone at the New Wolsey Theatre who supported the project

