

Edinburgh International Festival

Royal High School, Edinburgh

Writer in Residence Programme 2010

S6 TRIANGLE PROJECT

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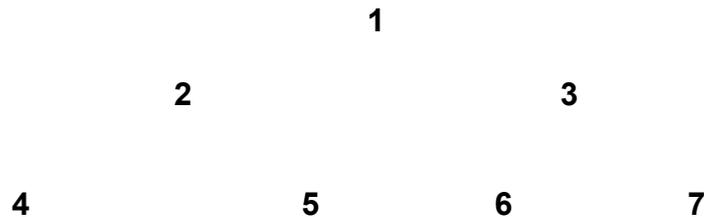
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EDITORS NOTE

This project is the result of a 6 week programme of creative writing – Indigenous Voices, Lost Narratives, New Worlds - undertaken by sixth year students at the Royal High School, Edinburgh and inspired by the themes, ideas and artists of the 2010 Edinburgh International Festival.

In this Triangle, six authors collaborated to produce one work of six linked pieces. Visually the structure of the work is as below:



The first piece of work was a quote from explorer Christopher Columbus that represented the themes of the Edinburgh International Festival 2010.

His quote was sent to two writers, each of whom wrote a piece inspired by it. Their two pieces were then sent to two groups of two writers each. All works were passed on anonymously and although the writers were responding only to the pieces immediately before them, echoes from the first piece can be found throughout.

Once completed the whole work was passed to visual artist and EIF Programme Development Associate Alex Hetherington to recreate in a new way.

In this manner the final project provided an opportunity for each individual student to create their own distinct piece of art, while also participating in the creation of other pieces of art that are coherent and new in their own right. Thus the project mirrors the process that happens during colonisation – a key theme of the 2010 Edinburgh International Festival – where one culture becomes involved with another, leading to new cultures (and expressions of that culture) which retain echoes of the past.

For more information about the Edinburgh International Festival please visit www.eif.org.uk.

Mary Paulson-Ellis
Writer in Residence, 2010

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Editorial

1. Christopher Columbus quote

1 Christopher Columbus inspired:

2 Abby McKenzie

3 Bek Oliva

2 Abby McKenzie inspired:

4 Carla Reddie

5 Katie Fraser

3 Bek Oliva inspired:

6 Rebecca Stewart

7 Susie Hay

Thanks

No. 1

Following the light of the sun, we left the
old world.

No. 2

The walk of shame
white light pulses on her retinas
forced to walk under the gaze of the morning sun
Her eyelashes rest upon her cheekbones
 Eyelids drooping
hair messy and lank
feet heavy on the pavement,
Littered with cans and cigarette butts
 From the night before
Her steps take on a rhythmic stagger
 She falls on- nearly home
birds squawk in the distance
Reminding her she should not be here
 Not awake
Should have stayed in, watched TV

No. 3

When the next level loaded I made sure to save my game, ever-wary of the blue screen of death, and then moved into the new world. A whitewashed castle glistened, its turrets with halos from the sun. A moat encircled it, a drawbridge pulled steep up in front of the big wooden doors. I didn't have enough money to pass, but I knew there was a bug in the programming that let you get in through the second floor window if you flew from the oak tree opposite. I was halfway up the tree when Mum shouted 'DINNERTIME! DINNER time.' So I guess it's a good think I saved in the end.

No. 4

My shameful walk,
Littered with thoughts that are not *really* mine,
But more the tequila's.
Finding love in a shot of tequila
Even just for a night.
Have you ever found love in a shot of tequila?
Even just for a night?
Bitter- salty- lemon- love.

The sun has more life in it than I,
Even for being billions of years old.
She rises quicker than I would hope
For I am still 20 minutes from home.

And those birds that taunt me with their sweet songs
Quarrel beautifully in the trees
About issues that I will never understand.
I sometimes wish I were a songbird,
So I wouldn't have to walk my shameful walk home.

No. 5

As I watched him stumble up the path made by the parting crowd I was confused. He was flanked by two men, their faces stoic and their eyes concentrated on the same spot on the horizon. He by contrast seemed unable to lift his head, his overgrown hair matted and falling across his dirty face. Suddenly, it was as though he had remembered something that had eluded him for months, as though he had figured out the answer to a riddle. All at once a gleam returned to his dead eyes. His rounded back straightened allowing him to walk with characteristic pride. Although he was still in his ripped and bloodstained clothing somehow he now looked noble in them rather than the defeated wreck he had been mere seconds ago. His eyes concentrated on the same object in the distance as the men beside him. As he saw it he smiled. But it wasn't the same smile that I knew. His smile was warm, it was familiar. When he smiled he was the most handsome man. This was not the same smile – it was a baring of teeth, a display of rotten, yellowing teeth. He didn't see me as I was immersed in the crowd – part of the undulating mass which tracked his every movement as he walked. I was hidden but I stretched my neck to see when I heard it. He had thrown back his shaggy mane and was laughing. It was a terrifying sound – the laugh of a madman. As he reached his destination the crowd moved as one to watch grimly. He walked up the wooden steps of the gallows, still laughing.

No. 6

Computer Mouse

Cautiously tap,
Right click,
Then scurry up the list,
Click, click, tap,
Processing data,
Firewall Protection,
Please wait,
Now scurry and scan,
Scroll, right click,
Control, alt, delete,
Backtrack and refresh,
Google search,
Caps lock
C
H
E
E
S
E
Shopping spree,
Scan, scroll
Scurry and find,
Select, enter,
Close,
Quit,
Safely home
To desktop

No. 7

I knew I shouldn't take the short cut home. A girl had slipped and fallen into the burn last January, and either drowned or frozen to death. But to make it home in time for dinner I knew I had to. Besides, it was March. And I'd done it plenty of times.

I hopped over the rickety wooden fence and into the small patch of woodland that I needed to pass through. I jogged through the woods at a fair pace- it was actually quite chilly for March. The leafy trees rose steeply above me, blocking out the last moments of the day's sun. I ran softly, picking up my knees high to keep my soft leather trainers from being spoiled by the moss that spread across the forest floor.

I could now make out the shapes of my village in the distance. There was the cluster of houses, with my own standing at the front, just cresting the horizon as I ran up the slight incline. I was nearly home. I just had to leap across the burn, then I'd be home. I braced myself, then made a run for it.

THANKS

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