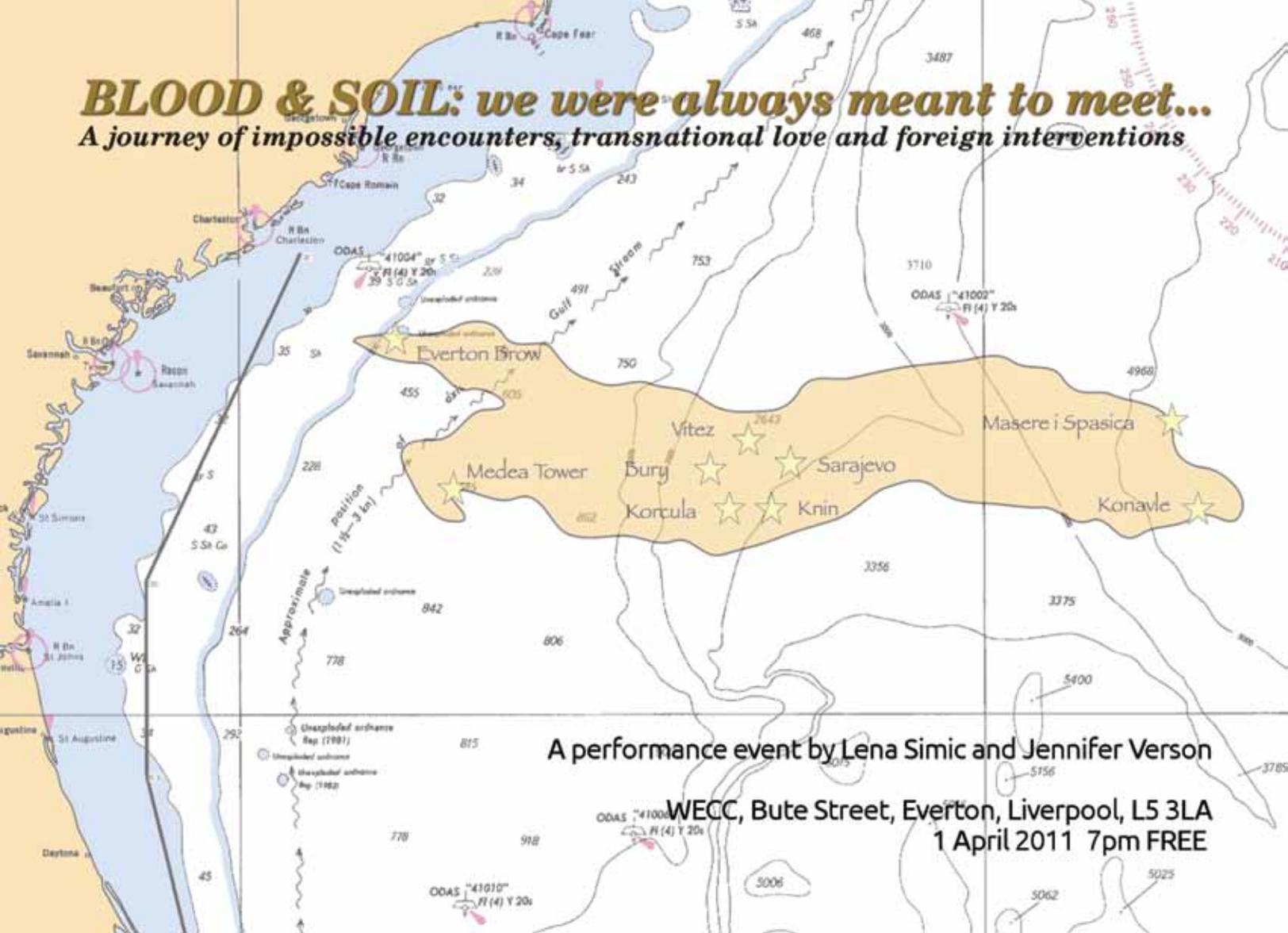


***BLOOD & SOIL™: we were™ always meant to meet...***  
***A journey of impossible encounters, transnational love and foreign interventions***



A performance event by Lena Simic and Jennifer Verson

WECC, Bute Street, Everton, Liverpool, L5 3LA  
1 April 2011 7pm FREE



# Blood & Soil: we were always meant to meet...

A journey of impossible encounters, transnational love and foreign interventions

A performance document by Lena Simic and Jennifer Verson

A performance event took place at the West Everton Community Council (WECC),

Bute Street, Everton, Liverpool, L5 3LA on 1 April 2011 at 7pm

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The Institute  
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of Dissent at  
Home



# Introduction

The performance Blood & Soil: we were always meant to meet... took place at the West Everton Community Council (WECC) in Liverpool on 1 April 2011.

A journey of impossible encounters, transnational love and foreign interventions

Marco Polo was a 13th century trader and explorer who traveled throughout Central Asia and China. Legend has it that he was born on the island of Korcula. It is believed that Marco Polo met Kublai Khan. His stories of distant lands have been transcribed by Rustichello, an Italian romance writer. The two met in a jail cell in Genoa...

Lena Simic and Jennifer Verson are both transnational migrants into the city of Liverpool, both following love. This performance is our exchange. Our hometowns, Dubrovnik and Chicago meet in Liverpool. From the top of Everton Brow we trace back the stories that brought us here - gulf stream, tidal currents, littoral zones, sailboats, airplanes, train journeys, coach trips and steamships. New places are visited, new connections are made whilst our memories are replayed and remade.

Think citizenship and belonging.  
Imagine a tale of distant places.  
Be prepared for an authentic fabrication.

This is an expedition. This is an exploration. This is a map making exercise. This is a test.

And we will be checking just how British you happen to be...

This publication is a performance document for Blood & Soil: we were always meant to meet...

The document is divided into three parts:

- Critical Context consisting of Imogen Tyler's short essay 'British Citizenship: A brief critical perspective' and 'Endnotes on How to Become British', a compilation of responses from friends and colleagues advising Lena what she needs to do in order to become British.
- Artefacts from the processes used to create the performance including commissioned works by migrants into Liverpool, writing from some of the participants in community workshops at the WECC and Jennifer's contextualizing piece 'Radical We'.
- Performance Text.

# CRITICAL CONTEXT

'British Citizenship: A brief critical perspective'

Imogen Tyler, Lancaster University

In Britain 'citizenship' is an oddly undeveloped concept. It was only after the Second World War, a period of intense post-imperial state-building and significant immigration from the former colonies, that any popular or sustained legal notion of citizenship emerged in British public culture. Indeed, British citizenship was in many ways an accidental consequence of attempts to rebuild post-war Britain and the end of the Empire. So whilst Britain is a 'mature democracy', it only became a 'nation of citizens' comparatively recently, before which time it preferred to imagine itself as 'an Empire without limits'.

After the second-world war, an influential group of economists, social reformers and sociologists argued there should be a welfare state funded through taxation. Despite the sweeping ideological changes which enabled the Welfare State to become a reality, the term 'citizen' remained a largely alien and even faintly ridiculous idea within British popular culture. Indeed in popular culture the idea of citizenship was tainted with negative 'radical associations': the French revolution, the rise of communism, National Socialism in Germany, the 'loony left' and more recently a fear of lost sovereignty in the face of 'Europeanization'.

The 1981 Nationality Act granted British Citizenship a formal legal status for the first time. However, this Act was not concerned with the constitutional rights of citizens; it was an Immigration Act which sought to define, limit and remove entitlements of citizenship from British nationals in the Commonwealth (the former colonies) in order to radically limit immigration to the British Isles. To achieve this, the Act created several convoluted categories of British nationality and citizenship, including a category of 'Commonwealth citizenship', which removed from British nationals in the Commonwealth (and Hong-Kong) their historic rights to residency in the United Kingdom.

A lot of people who are deported from Britain today would, until 1981, have had the right to reside here.

The 1981 Act was a response to a fear that Britain was losing its sense of national identity. An argument we still hear a lot in political rhetoric today. The passage of the 1981 Act through parliament was a significant event in the history of British race relations. While it was debated in parliament, riots broke out in Brixton, a borough of London with a significant black population. The Brixton riots marked the first significant period of civil unrest in Britain of the twentieth century, and sparked months of rioting in Black and Asian communities across England (including in Toxteth, Liverpool). The fear amongst these communities was that they were being made into 'second class' citizens.

Since 1981, the legal, political and social concept of 'British Citizen' has been integrated into a vast spectrum of British life. Today citizenship is employed as a means of 'securing the borders', for example through the establishment of a multi-million pound immigration industry: since the mid 1990s, Britain has witnessed the largest mass imprisonment of foreign nationals (non-citizens) since the internment of German nationals during the Second World War, the deportation of hundreds of thousands of failed asylum seekers and other 'illegals', and the enforced destitution of at least 250,000 men, women and children who have failed to secure citizenship and have no access to the provisions of the welfare state, but are unable or unwilling to return to often war-torn countries of origin.

Citizenship is also being employed to 'secure the future' through an 'active citizenship agenda' in school and communities, which aims to transform 'unruly' migrant and native populations into productive citizens, through criminalisation, education and 'forced volunteering'. Citizenship is increasingly marketed by the state as a moral value to be achieved by education and/or work. In fact today, we are all governed by citizenship, as ideas about the kinds of citizens we should be and systems are created to identify those that 'don't belong here'. The designation of failed or failing citizen scapegoats includes not only 'illegals' but the 'anti-social', the unemployed, the

obese and drug-addicted, the ` chavs ` and teenage mothers. There is perhaps no better example of the perverse logic of contemporary British citizenship than the policies which characterise the neoliberal ConDem government in Britain, in which rhetoric of social citizenship ('the Big Society'), prevails as an alibi for policies which are eroding the welfare state and deepening inequalities between classes and generations of people.

At an historical juncture when the state is instituting a programme of reforms aimed at 'deepening citizenship' (Lord Goldsmith 2008, p.11) through further legislation, compulsory citizenship education, and newly designed categories of 'active' and 'earned' citizenship, this critical perspective has aimed to illuminate the dark underbelly of the citizenship agenda. Of course, the story I am telling about British citizenship is partial. Citizenship is difficult to define because it is continually recreated through complex legal, political, social and pedagogical practices. Conflicting forms of citizenship materialize through local, national and transnational bureaucratic processes and perhaps this conflict is precisely at the heart of citizenship's democratic potential, as a source for social good, as well as a way of controlling people who live in Britain.

## **References**

Goldsmith, Lord. 2008. Citizenship Our Common Bond [online].  
<http://www.justice.gov.uk/docs/citizenship-report-full.pdf>

# Endnotes on How to Become British

## Lena Simic with Friends and Colleagues

Email from Lena to her Friends and Colleagues in the UK, 31.01.2010

Dear...

Today, 31.01.2010 is exactly 10 years that I entered the UK with Indefinite Leave to Remain. And here I am:

Three kids, performance practice, the Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home, PhD, permanent lecturer job and still married to Gary even though we married just for the papers...

As of today I have started the process of 'Becoming British' – applying for UK citizenship.

I will be filling in the obligatory forms, studying "Life in the United Kingdom: A journey to Citizenship" (published on behalf of the Life in the United Kingdom Advisory Group, with the permission of the Home Office on behalf of Her Majesty's Stationary Office), studying 'British citizenship Test Study Guide: The Essential Study Guide for the Life in the UK Test', going on to pass/fail the Citizenship text and attending the Citizenship Ceremony.... The whole process is estimated to last six months.

However, I also wanted to ask you, my British friends and colleagues, all of whom I have met during the past 10 years of living here, for a favour:

Could you please give me a task to accomplish which would help me with my project 'Becoming British'; what do you think it is I need to do in order to 'Become' British.

I have already been given some tasks by a few people that came to join me today at the Institute for a Sunday Roast. These include:

Reading the Daily Mail, daily. Watching Eastenders, Reading Alan Bennett plays, Reading the Guardian Listening to the Beatles, Trying to get to the BBC Radio 4 (Women's Hour is probably my best bet – someone suggested), Dressing up in a short dress and going out 'till 3am Saturday morning in Liverpool City Centre (+ drinking so much I don't feel the cold), Going to Butlins for a holiday, Going to Spain for an all inclusive holiday

It is primarily through these activities and tasks, which I receive from you, that I want to start my investigatory journey into citizenship...

Just to say that I will make whatever advice you give me part of a performance (or its documentation) if that is OK with you, please let me know.

Thank you and looking forward to your replies

Lena



A

Hey Lena,  
And welcome to this green and pleasant land,  
ha ha ha!

My very first thought on reading this, was to cook a roast dinner with all the trimmings, but it would seem by the end of the email that you have already done this so I think we can conclude you must already be British! I am going to think about this some more and get back to you, although I also agree very much with Emily's white bread toast, marmite, porridge, sausage and beans. I have a nostalgic love of baked beans which disgusts my friend who is from the south of France and seems to encapsulate much of what is wrong with (some) British food for her! I love them. and mushy peas, but that is a recently acquired grown up taste. Probably you should walk through a field of cows and go to the seaside too. Eatenders might help, or Coronation Street. Sweetie jars, crisps...but it is not all about food- I will think on.

Looking forward to seeing you friday!

Love Abi XXX

Abi brought Marmite, limited edition Martson's Pedigree, England Cricket, with yeast from the official beer of England cricket. At the back of the jar says: 'Cricket is like Marmite, entirely eccentric, wholly British and something the rest of the world will never truly understand.' Dicky Bird

\*\*\*

Hi Lena,  
I suggest that you start to drink a 'cup of tea' every time you are feeling stressed, worried, upset, nervous or anxious. Also you must offer a 'cup of tea' to anyone who comes into your house. Finally, start using the phrase 'pop the kettle on love'.

Good luck

Alice

\*\*\*

Hi Lena,

I had some ideas. They all involve food or drink!

Eat a ploughman's or a roast dinner in a country

pub with a pint.

Watch the match in a pub with a pint.

Watch Wimbledon whilst eating strawberries and cream.

Have fish and chips on a park bench or overlooking the Mersey.

Get chips on the way home after a debauched night out.

Stay in a seaside B&B and order a cooked breakfast.

Go camping in the Lake District and cook bacon, eggs and beans and tea on a camping stove.

Have tea and cake in John Lewis.

Eat your dinner whilst watching reality TV.

Let me know how you get on,

Anna

B

Ben advised me to get onto Radio 4, Women's Hour being my best bet. Also to drink so much when dressed in my mini skirt on a night out so that I no longer feel the cold

\*\*\*

To become British, Lena, you must be able to prove you understand the concept of 'ALBION'. A god place to start is the art and writing of the very British William Blake.

Best wishes

Bryan

C

Hi Lena, my nearly English compadre,

I think to be more English you should try to colonise someone or some land.

Or have a game of Crown Green Bowling. My dad plays.

Carmel

\*\*\*

Hey Lena

Congrats on your 10 years!

I planned to mention this in my lecture today, so thanks for coinciding it with that! Ha

Perhaps you could borrow Bry's MBE and wear

it for a day?

Nothing says British quite like the honours system...

There's even a dress code for when you wear it!! (not that he ever has!)

X

\*\*\*

...very much agree about the queueing, Bill Bryson writes about how the British have developed the single queue for the multiple desk scenario, French don't queue at all and the Spanish neither queue, nor move away from the desk/buffet when they are done...do Germans queue? I think the Canadians are a bit like the British about queueing. I was nearly deported at Montreal last time for inadvertently jumping a queue, you'd have thought I'd spat in someone's face the way I was looked at.

hope you're all well. it hasn't stopped raining in Cardiff since I arrived chez lovely Emily, but the research for Market Road is going well never the less...looking forward to meeting James in person tomorrow, any concerns or ideas you want to put in my head before that happens let me know. I'm meeting him at 3pm

lots of love

cxix (Claire)

ps what about chatting? Talking about the weather, top 10 British chatting topics?

\*\*\*

Caroline brought Stuart Maconie's 'Adventures on the High Teas' book. She also texted me on 17 Feb telling me to read some articles in the Guardian <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/feb/17/how-to-be-british-hadley-freeman>

D

Hi Lena,

Good luck with your project, it sounds really interesting and sorry we couldn't make it to yours on Sunday. Here are a few thoughts on Britishness, developed largely from our time in Austria, seeing ourselves and our Britishness more objectively and discussing National traits with other artists from Turkey and Germany. They're not tasks, as such, but I guess they

are observations that could be developed into tasks where appropriate. And yes, of course use anything you want for your performance.

Politeness - a major British characteristic which can be broken down into several different behavioural patterns, here are just a few...

- Over use of deferential terms such as Sorry, please, if you don't mind...

- Guardedness of emotions, exercising restraint in social situations

- Lack of directness, not expressing what you mean, agreeing with others to save face

- Feeling acute embarrassment at the behaviour of oneself / others that goes against social norms (but trying to show it, obviously!)

- Politeness can also be felt as a sense of coldness / keeping others at arms length

- Can also be associated with judgment of others who are deemed to be less polite

- Queuing

I guess politeness / embarrassment also leads nicely on to some other social conventions, such as the obvious talking about the weather, or more specifically moaning - e.g. saying things like "I like it hot, but not this hot", when it gets above about 15degrees.

Also:

- Repressing your emotions until either really drunk or angry, then crying or getting in a fight.

- Talking about "Europe" as a separate entity which we are not part of

- Obsession with security / crime, installing CCTV on the front of your house

- dislike / mistrust of strangers (whilst remaining utterly polite)

- Anti-intellectualism

- Political apathy

- Having a strong provincial accent

- Dressing in more outlandish / expressive clothes than most of our European counterparts, more makeup, hair dye etc (I was particularly aware of this one while we were in Austria, it actually made me feel quite depressed feeling like I should be wearing no makeup and grey, baggy clothes to fit in with all the young people. It was so nice to get back to the UK, plaster my face in makeup and wear something a bit wild!

We'll update you if we think of any more. Good luck becoming British! See you tomorrow xx

E

Eat one / all / any of these things for breakfast

1. marmite on white sliced bread toast
2. porridge made with full fat milk and honey
3. porridge made with water and salt
4. sugar puffs
5. fried egg, beans and sausages

I'm sure this is the building blocks of my britishness

Love emily

Forgot to add, this comes very much from my dad's side of the family. my mum's side are all from mainland europe and eat fruit, yoghurt and freshly baked bread with jam for breakfast.

X

\*\*\*

Hi Lena- I think hosting a cream tea - scones, jam, clotted cream and tea in a teapot with cups and saucers (not teabags and mugs) is something you might add to the list. Oh and if you tried this English 'ritual' - you might introduce a rule about having to talk about the weather! best E.

F

Hi Lena,

Hope you are well there. Here are our suggestions for 'Becoming British'.

1. Apologise when it's not your fault.
2. When driving during heavy traffic, whenever safe let a person or persons cross the road or let a vehicle pull out in front of you.
3. When asked by a charity worker for a moment of your time you must internally recite the mantra:

I am on an island

I will never meet the impoverished you cannot have my money

Externally you state, I'm sorry I have no time to spare at the moment.'

G

Hi Lena

Good to hear from you. These are my

suggestions which are much more 'traditional' than some you have been given and sort of range across the class divide- though maybe you have to decide whether you are going to be middle or working class British?

There are several and it doesn't sound like you will have time to do them all so I'll leave it to you to pick one: learn how to play cricket (and teach your kids how to): go to the seaside for a day out in the rain and eat sandwiches plus flask of tea either in the car- or much better- in some sort of open sided shelter; start a scrap book on the Royal family- or one of the Royal family - and go to an event where they are visiting: learn to do the hokey cokey and always join in the conga: listen to shipping broadcast on radio 4: complain about the weather at every possible opportunity: on your late night out in Liverpool end the night with a kebab as you walk home - in high heels: chose curry and pizza as your favourite foods; watch the last night of the Proms on TV and sing along to the finale : go to Wimbledon and queue for tickets or just watch it on TV and get very passionate about a male British player: start feeling just a tiny bit ambivalent about the Germans...(remember WWW 2) and the French ( remember Agincourt) but forget the rest Europe exists- except during relevant football matches and during the Eurovision song contest; become ridiculously obsessed by the 'Bloomsbury Group'; join in pub quizzes: learn the names of Henry 8th Six wives but make sure you then forget at least 2 of them; go and visit a National Trust property (one with a nice garden and a tea room); learn the poem 'IF' by Rudyard Kipling by heart; take up gardening; never miss an opportunity to put on fancy dress - especially for charity; always bring your own tea bags with you when you travel abroad.

I think that's enough to be going on with.....

Best

Gerry

H

Great to hear from you, and to read about "Becoming British." I think you've got to have a bottle of HP sauce along on the table (look carefully at label next time you're in a shop that

stocks it); also, Colman's English mustard. As for Radio 4, try cottoning on to The Archers (daily, 15 mins, for last 60+ years). Catch up on old films, starting with Brief Encounter and the Carry On films.

Helenx

I

Ilva and Sasha (new British citizens from Columbia and Serbia) suggested I should walk around Hardman Street in a mini skirt at 3am in the morning, go to an all inclusive holiday in Spain and eat fish and chips there. I should also get a fake tan.

\*\*\*

Imogen and Bruce, who were are roast dinner, 10 years on, party suggested to read watch a soap opera, like Eastenders, take a family to Butlins holiday, read Daily Mail. Their children Louie and Bella said I should listen to the Beatles, read Alan Bennett plays and read the Guradian.

Other suggestions at the party included becoming a member of a golf club, go to royal Ascot or Grand National, visiting National Parks

J

i feel rather serious about this!

So, implicit is the questionable notion of joining some kind of white british cultural norm. Ok. Well. This would be my stab at that.

Actually, on reflection, i would prescribe it more for white britons, but anyway.

Read "How Green was my Valley" novel by Richard Llewelyn

Read "Sea Room" by Adam Nicolson

Watch Huston film "The Field"

Read "Only the rivers run free: Northern Ireland, the women's war" by Eileen Fairweather, Roisin McDonough, Melanie McFadyean

Read "The Empire Strikes Back - Race & Racism in 1970s Britain" by Paul Gilroy and others

Read "The Sea Kingdoms: The History of Celtic Britain & Ireland" by Alastair Moffat

Read "Things Fall Apart" by Chinua Achebe

Read "The Corporation that changed the world: How the East India Company shaped the modern multinational" by Nick Robins

Read The Road to Wigan Pier - Orwell

Watch Ken Loach films set in UK x 2

Wood & Walters comedy series on TV

Absolutely Fabulous (TV)

Watch Morecambe & Wise comedy (TV)

James Bond movies

Watch totally classic films "Passport to Pimlico" and "The Lady Killers"

(Ealing Comedy)

"Carry On" films (at least two, but the more the better)

Visit Clifford's Tower, York Castle, site of 12th century massacre of Jews (100 years later, jews expelled from Britain and forbidden from entering for 350 years)

Walk the Pennine Way (or another long meaningful walk)

Stand on the cliffs at Dover

Visit Isles of Scilly, Shetland, St Kilda, and Wight

Cross the Channel by ferry

Cross the Atlantic from Liverpool by cargo ship!

Sit on the Circle Line (London) for 2 hours, observe...

Go up the Mersey to Manchester by boat

Count how many references to anywhere in the UK other than London occur in

The Guardian, Independent, Times etc

Of course, the main and definitive "test" is whether you have come to love Marmite, and have nervous palpitations at the thought of running out.

good luck

xxxxx jane

\*\*\*

Dear Lena

Though born British, I too don't have a drop of English/Scottish/Welsh/Irish blood in me. But here goes:

Learn the rules of cricket and then watch an amateur league Sunday game (complete with picnic)

# ARTEFACTS

## a radical we...

by Jennifer Verson

'Blood and Soil: we were always meant to meet...' performance is part of a process and a body of creative work that Lena started in 2009, the original title of the piece was 'Becoming British'.

When Lena invited me to collaborate with her on this performance it was complicated. I was studying to pass my 'Life in the UK' test to get my Indefinite Leave to Remain, but I wasn't sure if I would ever actually be able to become British. The US State Department frowns on the process of swearing allegiance to a foreign power.

With the invitation, though, together, Lean and I began to weave a web of 'we'. We are women who migrated here because we have spouses that are Scouse. We have children that are now more Scouse than not.

When we began talking of this publication we initially thought we would like to reflect the voices of migrants who we shared a connection to: beginning with colleagues and friends; moving outwards to acquaintances and chance encounters. The resulting publication is not a representation of the voices of migrants rather each person is a voice in a network that expands from this first conversation between Lena and myself.

In the early stages of our devising process we remembered places that we have been and those where are parents and grandparents were born, places that no longer exist; countries, streets, neighborhoods and shtetls. We imagined that a passport from a country that no longer existed could sum up this complicated emotion of the disappeared places that litter our lineage.

In our first workshop we experimented with a form of collective writing that blends the techniques of eavesdropping with the brevity of the haiku. Yoel, Pa Madou, Dejan, Adam, Lena and myself sat down together and made poems of each others memories and in the following section we include one of those to document our process.

This small group all had very different stories of migrating. I wondered on the way home about the privilege and pride of using the term 'we' to describe this group of people; In the current climate of bitter and racist debate about

immigration, many people would prefer that we 'stick with our own kind': Yoel should hang out with the nice Europeans, Pa with the asylum seekers, Dejan with expatriate academics and Adam should conveniently forget that his grandparents were migrants from Ireland. Though each one of us faced a completely different set of challenges, we were all migrants and/or descendants of migrants.

It was in the context of this discussion in the first workshop that Yoel gave a name to the complicated lineage of the citizenship debate 'jus soli' and 'jus sanguinis' right of blood and right of soil: two different modes of determining who has a right to live in a country. Do we inherit our citizenship by blood or is it given to all humans based on the soil where they are born?

Behind our process was a desire to unpick the politics of the 'Life in the UK' test. We worked with a large group of women from around the world who were English language learners, we thought to de-stabilize the inherent power structure of 'student and test' by using dance and kinesthetic learning to approach a set of statistical information that we felt was designed to disempower and humiliate migrants.

Many will never forget the cheer:  
ring a ding England fifty million  
Up north Scotland 5.1

And always there was the sense that activism and action was an integral part of the process. With the commissioning of the catalogue each of the contributors donated their artist fee to the legal fund for Pa Madou Bojang, a friend of Britt's, a journalist, then an asylum seeker and as of 7th of March a refugee.



**Lena Simic** is a new British citizen. Lena has lived in Liverpool for the last ten years. She is also Croatian. **Jennifer Verson** is American. She is currently undertaking the process of obtaining Indefinite Leave to Remain. Both artists have extensive experience in contemporary performance making, and have had their work presented locally, nationally and internationally. Both have successfully completed Life in the UK text. Both are married to Scousers and have little Scouse kids!



# PRINCE & THE GRIOT, DJELLY WITH PA MODOU BOJANG (PRINCE) IN UK

**Prince:** Who Djelly Fafa Kuyateh?

**Djelly:** Djelly Fafa Kuyate is the son of Djelly Mama Kuyateh and Djelly Madi Kuyateh.

**Prince:** You are a griot and griots make a living out of praising people for reward. What is the difference between you and beggars?

**Djelly:** I am not a beggar. We transfer past generations to the new ones. We are bags full of memories of the past; Without me, your past would never be known; We are the memories of your ancestors who had struggled to make this place a better place for you to live.

**Prince:** why do you always shout the names of people never see or met?

**Djelly:** this knowledge was given to me by my father and to him by his father, because without us, the name of your ancestors would be forgotten and you will not have any value in this present world; You only get your value through what had already been done by your ancestors in the past.

**Prince:** but you always expect something from me for your survival

**Djelly:** Of course yes, because this foundation of giving me something has been already laid by your ancestors to mine. We are the bags of your hidden secret, we are bags full of memories and we are the bags that store all the secrets. We are the art of speeches, speaking of your genealogy and without me, perhaps you will never know who exactly you are.

**Prince:** You are talking about my generation before you and I, how come you know it better than I do.

**Djelly:** since time immemorial, the kuyatehs had been in the services of your ancestors, who are the princes of the Keitas in Manding. There is no secret for us and perhaps without my ancestors, you would never know your history and this had been past from generations to generation before you and I.

**Prince:** So why should I be feeding you for only talking about my ancestry?

**Djelly:** because you have to do as your ancestors did. I was born djelly and we have no farmland, but we are the content of your own secret without which your past would be totally forgotten; We make you what you are today; Honourable of your culture from the past to

the present! Be proud of feeding me as your father did to my father. This has been going on before you and I were born. Without me, you will not know where you come from; And if you do not know where you came from, will be impossible to identify where you going.

**Prince:** what does that benefit me in this 21st century to know where I come from? I already know who and where I am?

**Djelly:** This helps you to know your value as a child of Sundjatta Keita, the king of Manding, who gave us this hierarchy. We can't survive without you, the princes and you also cannot be known to your surrounding world without me, Djelly.

## Goosey Goosey Gander: Eavesdropping Haiku from Workshop #1

song right away  
children's nursery rhyme  
gooshy gooshy ganza  
wouldn't say his prayers  
quack quack quack  
upstairs  
downstairs  
broke his little back  
in nursery  
with friends  
sit around in a circle  
do the actions  
very very small  
maybe 3 maybe  
with lots of other children  
the idea of throwing  
people  
down the stairs  
very  
energetic

## **Accounts of Transnational Love by white 'privileged' Europeans; a Spanish woman, a German woman and an English man**

I have always looked for love from far away places. The paradox of growing up in a small village, a closed community, a closed network, of receiving a sophisticated education on exclusion... it inspires either a strong desire to remain rooted or an unbearable desire to see the world.

Now boy, get on the road!

Love swiftly traps you.

You have become an avatar of transnational love.

You have moved somewhere to be with somebody because the geographical separation made your relationship impossible. You felt a need to try and lay down roots together. It's the triumph of romance over nationalism, a gesture that flies in the face of capitalist self interest!

He loves me. I love him. We want to belong.

He leaves his home for me. (Not only for me, he says. This is a good City, he always wanted to try and live somewhere else.)

And what you get is not little: a transnational relationship in a foreign country, a privileged access to another culture, another mind set through the intimacy of your relationship with the other, a back stage pass to the complexities, intricacies and sense of belonging within a culture. You feel empowered because you have become truly transnational, freeing yourself from the reductive aspects of your own culture by disassociation, while picking and choosing when and how you associate yourself with this new culture. Or so you think, while an underlying fear haunts you. Access to everywhere and nowhere.

This is not really my city either, nor my country (it's his), but all of a sudden I am the place. Me and this city become the same. In his eyes. Or in mine.

The fear also haunts your transnational love. Your sense of belonging,

your identity, your struggles with complexity all seem to be refracted through the prism of your relationship. You have potentially given up your 'dependence' on your national identity only to pin all your desire to belong onto the other. This conundrum exists for each partner, one having given up their physical country and the other partly disconnecting from their own culture by investing/hiding in the richness of this one 'other'.

He is angry. At me. At this place. And then at himself. He is lonely. I feel guilty. I am angry about feeling guilty. I want to try harder. I feel suffocated. I try to be understanding. I fail. We are both sad.

Next time we land differently, somewhere, again because of love and again because we want to move beyond our limits, and there we are, a part, by default, of an unknown space that is inhabited by people, communities, which this time we assume are not ours.

But hey, love has to keep crossing borders to remain alive, so it needs to confront that community of exclusion, it needs to claim its right to be there, it needs to change altogether what a community might be. And so we do, and soon love starts to feel trapped in the conflict of the space it inhabits, and soon, it finds new limits that it can cross.

Let's try again.

Okay.

## Disappeared Places and Passports

by Lena Simic with Marina Susil-Pryke, Dejan Karadagic, Maya Mofardin and Anne Connell

### WHERE DO YOU COME FROM?

I am from Dubrovnik. Well, more specifically I am from Montovjerna, a part of Dubrovnik. I grew up in a flat on the second floor. I love living up. I don't like houses; I like flats.

Dubrovnik used to be in Yugoslavia, now it's in Croatia. My street used to be called Masere i Spasica, now it is Od Kneza Branimira.

I come from the sea. I come from rocks and sea, not sandy beaches, but rocks and sea.

**Marina:** The last use of my Yugoslav passport was in February 1992, when I visited my parents for the last time before the break up of the country. The only inclination that things were going to change was on the night out with my school friends. Although said more as a joke, 'Well Marina, we might have a different name and everything might look different to you next time you come home', the smile was wiped off our faces as we all nodded. We said goodbye and I promised to them and my family I was returning home for good that summer of '92.

Get up, the war has started - my father woke me up. This was January 91.

**Dejan:** My first passport I ever had was of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (in Serbian Savezna Republika Jugoslavija, SRJ), which in that time was comprised of Serbia and Montenegro, and it was of blue colour. Although I was citizen of big Yugoslavia (Socialist Federal Republic Yugoslavia, SFRY), I never had the burgundy passport of SFRY, since it was rather difficult to get it for a young male before he served compulsory army service or, alternatively, had links in the secret police, which I did not.

When my mother was 27 days old, her older brother, a 3 year old, spilt

boiling coffee all over him. He died. My grandmother has a framed picture of him on her wall. He's in the field with a flower. He is wearing a sailor's suit. She says he's an angel.

My mother says that back then kids died young all the time. It was common.

**Maya:** One day my mum rung me. She said: "You need to send me some photos of yourself, you will need a new passport." So she got everything organized. She took out my new Croatian birth certificate for me and then got me a brand new Croatian passport. With the brand new photo inside that I sent her.

Except it wasn't called a passport any more but 'Putovnica', as in document for travel. It arrived in registered mail and it was new and hard and rigid and sort of shiny. Like I suppose this new country was hoping to be.

My grandfather saw Yugoslav Second World War heroes Masera and Spasic die in an explosion at sea. I grew up in a flat on the street named after them, Masere i Spasica 49. After the Yugoslav civil war, they renamed the street to Kneza Branimira (Duke Branimir). He was one of the first Croatian dukes. Masera and Spasic were just communists.

**Marina:** So my Yugoslav passport is now part of the history of the nation that once was formally known as Yugoslavia. We are now known as Bosnians, Croats, Serbs, Bosnian Croats, Bosnian Serbs, Serbian Croats, Croatian Serbs etc...

As far as I am concerned, Bosnian Croat is only on paper, in my heart I will always be Yugoslav.

Ratko was the name of my grandmother's son who died. Ratko means - 'of war'. He was a war child. I often jokingly acknowledge that I am a war child too. It makes people listen to me. It makes me important, or they are just being polite.

**Anne:** Anyway, on the morning of the trip, we took the train to get off at a station nearer the border and then hike to the nearest West-German town. Sure enough, in the course of the morning it transpired that two of the boys had forgotten to bring their passports. Oh, no! I

remember feeling really worried! Not our teacher. When we got to the checkpoint, she just made them run ahead and raise their arm in the distance, as if they were holding their passport in the air. They must have been so scared. I was, I really wouldn't have wanted to be them! I actually thought they could get shot in the back! Nothing happened. I'm sure my teacher was aware of the farce it was by then. But at nine, I didn't have a clue.

We went into the nearest town and I had the biggest ice cream I'd ever had, and it actually tasted of strawberries AND had strawberry bits in it. What an experience! I never needed that passport again.

My uncle, a sea captain, called me off the Florida seas one October morning. He told me Dubrovnik, my hometown, had been bombed. I was in Bastrop, Louisiana at the time. This was once again 91.

**Dejan:** In October 2001, I visited USA, for the first time. When arrived at the Los Angeles airport, and show my passport on the checking point, the US immigration officer, with serious face, told me: 'I am sorry your country does not exist!'. My explanation that I got the tourist visa only month before that in the US Embassy in London persuaded him to phone for assistance, and after some help of IT guys, who found a way to enter 'nonexistent country' into system, I was admitted to USA.

### **WHERE ARE YOU GOING?**

See, I am after the passport, the British passport. When I was little I used to say I want to marry someone from England because England is blue. Blue is my favourite colour. So I married someone from England. England is more grey than blue. Passport is kind of dark red. I need the passport. At airport arrivals and departures I am all the other nationalities. I want to go directly through. I want the passport.



# Blood and Soil:

## we were always meant to meet...

*Jennifer and Lena performing together. They bring on stage CD player, clock, tests and pencils. Jennifer and Lena giving out tests and pencils to audiences as they come into the hall.*

### **LENA** *semi-improvised*

Dear audiences, you are here to be tested on how British you are. referring to her Union Jack dress Please note my outfit for the occasion. Over the next 45 minutes you have an opportunity to complete 'Life in the UK' test. But beware, there are prizes for the winners. Feel free to work on your test whilst the performers are speaking or whilst the music is playing. 45 minutes overall. Do try to work on it on your own. And in silence. Out of respect for the performers who will be performing their multiple belongings to this isle. You can start the test now.  
*Jennifer starts the stopwatch*

### **JEN** *lectures from the front of the theatre perhaps with a slide of the screen*

the thing about applying for citizenship is that you are prostrating yourself to the state for the privilege of something that is fundamental for the survival of your family, and the state doesn't care who you are or what you've done or that your child's grandmother is 81 years old and spent her adult life delivering good British babies and doesn't have the nine hundred pounds to give you for the honour of being able to hold her granddaughter and it is humiliating, and if you are an artist or an activist and your very existence depends on your ability to memorize the population numbers of the four countries of the United Kingdom along the the racial and religious make up of each one and hundreds of other very pertinent but shall we say 'obscure' facts, the entire process can render you-silent

and what happens when an artist who speaks for her living is rendered speechless

I draw your attention to the aphotic zone of the ocean  
this is the area with no light, there are no plants and the species that have evolved to live here are very special indeed

This is the area of our memory that is inhabited by the ancient longings and rituals of our ancestors

### **LENA** *walking on the beam number one*

You might have heard of a traveller called Marco Polo who is believed to be born on the island of Curzola. Marco Polo was a 13th century trader and explorer who traveled throughout Central Asia and China. It is believed that Marco Polo met Kublai Khan, the ruler of Mongolia and China. His stories of distant lands have been transcribed by Rustichello, an Italian romance writer. The two met in a jail cell in Genoa...

This is my story about distant lands and forgotten places.

*reaching desk number eight CURZOLA*

The island of Curzola is our first destination. The island of Curzola took in refugees and evacuees of the long forgotten South-Eastern European country war in the last decade of the last century. Old people, women with children, young girls who were in need of partying and sex. The girls wore their hair loose and swam topless in the sea. The war was raging nearby the beautiful island of Curzola. A war amongst brothers, a war with new armies and new uniforms. A war for the new. The troops of newly recruited soldiers visited the island regularly, as they heard that the young girls there were promiscuous and horny. The soldiers used to patrol the streets and nightclubs searching for loose girls. The soldiers looked unkempt and rough. They didn't seem very new, their faces were old. Their guns were second-rate and they stank. At night-time they would ply the girls with whiskey, offer them cigarettes and take them to the rocky shore. The girls were desperate. They would let the newly recruited soldiers fuck them hard on concrete near broken windows and glass. They felt obliged to them and their new army, their new country. They would let the soldiers screw them ruthlessly on the seashore and leave immediately afterwards. The girls, open and bleeding, wasted and full of salt, dreamt of some distant lands and some distant more gentle human kind. The girls plotted and plotted and eventually escaped. referring to soundtrack Miss Sarajevo and walking

along the beam number two This is called foreign intervention. reaching  
desk number one BOBARA, sitting on its edge

### JEN

*BATHYAL: Sunlight does not reach this zone, meaning there can be no primary  
production. It is known as themidnight zone because of this feature. Because of the  
lack of light, some species do not have eyes,*

the child cries over and over on the train heading north  
i want to go home mommy i want to go home  
mournful in my black boots I I sit and wait for my innocence to grow back  
so I can wail like the child  
i want to go home  
but  
like my hymen my home is gone forever and that's the knowledge that  
separates us by generations  
on the way  
we pass  
gm wastelands  
post industrial depression towns that wail in the night  
we want to go home  
their maidenhead a nineteen fifties dream of prosperity and paychecks  
was ruptured by one hard thrust of reagan-omics  
Jackson-it doesn't grow back  
vanished into the night, new world order and feminism, white picket fences  
burned with bras as dysfunctional families crumbles  
it is never coming back  
but I am really tight when you haven't been fucked for a while  
so Jackson voted for Clinton and I head north to the town where I was born  
its not your home  
we are the dinner guest of the american dream who overstayed our  
welcome waiting for the rain to stop  
the hosts are starting to fidget and the kids are getting whiney  
but we hang on  
hoping dessert is going to be served  
its not our home

### LENA *lying on the desk number one BOBARA*

A town of Bobara is a place where all the roads and rail tracks meet.  
Travellers sit together resting in coffee houses. Drinks are cheap. Summers  
are hot and dusty. The town is sad and lonely. Music plays very quietly. You  
can hardly hear it. Its residents are restless whilst travellers are resting. The  
truth is that they all want to leave. The town has seen much movement and  
not enough progress. A strategic place, a trade place.

One early August during the last decade of the last century the national  
radio station programme was interrupted by a foreign speaking voice with  
a following announcement:

'All British Citizens leave the country now. I repeat all British citizens are  
advised to leave the country now. All British Citizens leave the country now.  
I repeat all British citizens are advised to leave the country now.'

The town of Bobara was under siege. The liberators were underway. Some  
of the residents ran away. Most of the British citizens did leave the country  
during those stormy days. lies down with the notebook over her head

### JEN *BATHYAL*

i ninety five in infinite pompana beach florida to hampton beach new  
hampshire  
with not enough money for gas  
let alone boiled peanuts at pedro's south of the border  
we are headed for the county of the pointed firs  
when outside manhattan  
gas gauge sliding towards e  
supercedes my childish wish to see the statue of liberty  
then when grave yard shift fatigue  
marries complacency  
we miss the lincoln tunnel turn off  
caress a median  
and almost meet death  
sun bleached red hair on white fingers clutch the steering wheel  
my two flat beige palms press the dash

my parents paid central driving school  
so they wouldn't have to spend endless hours in terror

with a reluctant teenager  
mother's right foot pumping that imaginary break  
she used to like to drive  
until heading out of skokie one day  
a middle aged chiropractor  
ran a red light  
and totaled the 1976 silver granada  
her always instinctive right arm  
that shot out at sudden stops  
to keep me in my seat  
now had a bursistis  
that never ceased to bother her when it rained  
but there were no sudden stops in the fall early dark of foster beach  
and when I graduated to the streets  
it was my father that took me out  
on saturday morning  
to tell me stories of selling socks  
on maxwell street  
while we cruised a deserted clyborn avenue  
my adolescent arms  
never knew danger  
never reached out to keep demons away  
but she saw to the other side of the glass  
grown up girls driving unfamiliar streets  
she saw lovers and rapists and demons and loss  
and held me tight in that seat  
until I left the car in the appropriate way

after she's gone  
nothing can make me feel say  
i ride rta cta amtrak and greyhound  
until finally  
i have no choice but to hold on to myself

on the long deserted highway stretches  
my short brown fingers turn white clutching the steering wheel  
until finally  
i pull off the highway

to puke my guts up in the deserted stall of a waffle house  
her long thin wrinkled fingers  
never turned white  
always held me in my seat

in a borrowed red convertible  
with new love  
new summer  
new york night  
when demons come and beckon us through a shatter on impact windshield  
we both hold on for ourselves  
because neither of us has hands like hers

#### **LENA** *on desk number four MARCANA*

There are yellow trams connecting the great city of Lombardia with the market town of Marcana. If you were ever to visit this buzzing place, you could not fail to notice the birds that sing in the trees on the main square near the final tram stop. The youth are hanging out around the benches and statues in the market town of Marcana on the main square near the final tram stop. They don't listen to the birds. They drink and swear loudly and fancy each other clumsily. They swear for each other. Their voices are gentle. They are yet to notice the birds. Oh, the singing trees in the market town of Marcana on the main square near the final tram stop.

Philip, Daniel, Becky, Rachel, Fiona, Elizabeth, Lena and Nicola met in the market town of Marcana. They were hosted by the Modern Warfare Museum.

They went outside. They listened to places. They sang in rounds. They watched the military parade, connected with the Modern Warfare Museum.

They whispered.

They sat quietly in pubs, in total silence.

They exchanged gifts.

They departed.

They overheard some people in the Modern Warfare Museum talking about ethos, sheer professionalism, long long history of 300 plus years, a history of combat, huge amounts of pride, being absolutely determined, complete

civil war, triangulated conflict, crucifying of people, hammering them into poles, turning them into river, cutting them into pieces. They overheard stories about soldiers diplomats, bringing civil authority, different fractions, negotiations, political groupings, delivering of aid, securing of areas, progress, making a difference. stands tall on the edge of desk number four, Ravel's Bolero music starts very quietly

## JEN

*ABYSSAL: this zone remains in perpetual darkness and never receives daylight. It is the deeper part of the midnight zone which starts in the bathyalpelagic waters above*

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood  
and sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveller, long I stood  
and looked down one as far as I could  
to where it bent in the undergrowth;  
Then took the other, as just as fair,  
and having perhaps the better claim  
because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
though as for that, the passing there  
had worn them really about the same,  
And both that morning equally lay  
in leaves no feet had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.  
I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I --  
I took the one less travelled by,  
and that has made all the difference

**LENA** *to the sound of Ravel's Bolero, on desk number five MEZZA*

If you ever knew a splendid city called Mezza you would know that it hosted the World Games back in the eighth decade of the last century and boasted first ever Holiday Hotel in that long forgotten country of the South Eastern

Europe. All the people of that forgotten country of the South Eastern Europe watched the images of that magnificent high rise building Holiday Hotel on their television sets. Glass and steel, their own reflections. They were proud albeit a bit envious. They hoped that one day such wondrous buildings Holiday Hotel might appear in their own cities. However, Mezza was a model city, full of music, food and drink. It deserved such luxuries, journalists and athletes. Youth. Harmony. Holiday Hotel. one arm raised high, on the edge of the desk looking outwards

## JEN

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of "interposition" and "nullification"--one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

**LENA** *leaning towards desk number six GIUPPANA*

In the region of Giuppana there are people who stand there staring at you. The landscape's very striking, with dwellings and churches cut into the sandstone. The women wear dark purple dresses and there are markings of another race upon them. As they stare at you, you begin to fear them. As they stare at you, you name them barbarians. They are silent and powerful. The women converse with other women only. They never speak

with strangers. They move about in groups. They are rumoured to be bold lovers, full of pleasure.

### JEN

I am an old woman named after my mother  
My old man is another child that's grown old  
If dreams were lightning thunder was desire  
This old house would have burnt down a long time ago

Chorus:

Make me an angel that flies from montgom'ry  
Make me a poster of an old rodeo  
Just give me one thing that I can hold on to  
To believe in this living is just a hard way to go

When I was a young girl well, I had me a cowboy  
He weren't much to look at, just free rambling man  
But that was a long time and no matter how I try  
The years just flow by like a broken down dam.

Repeat chorus:

There's flies in the kitchen I can hear 'em there buzzing  
And I ain't done nothing since I woke up today.  
How the hell can a person go to work in the morning  
And come home in the evening and have nothing to say.

**LENA** *walking along beam number one, then on desk number three SANT' ANDREA*  
Walking through the hills away from the sea you will come across the settlement of Sant' Andrea, rather small, with dirt roads and a few shops selling a few things. Shops open every day without fail. The place is full of broken damaged buildings. Sant' Andrea is in conflict zone, amongst two armies disrespecting ceasefire. None of the buildings have windows. Oh, the noise. All the glass shattered from detonations. The sky is full of noise. No one ever repairs the windows as more detonation is expected. Conflict is ongoing between the two newly formed armies. People of Sant' Andrea

are weary. There are no adult men there, except for foreign soldiers keeping peace between the two warring armies. The adult men of Sant' Andrea are in either of the two warring armies. The foreign soldiers spend their time in the old disused school. They play with the children outside and they give them sweets. They escort the convoys of humanitarian aid through the checkpoints. They have to be careful, as they must not be seen to favour one party or another. They need to remain neutral. Old people, women and children of Sant' Andrea are relatively friendly to them. Maybe they want something, maybe they are just being nice. They come and visit them in the school, they clean for them, they see them outside on their duty. Some even dare invite them into their demolished houses and prepare strong coffee for them. Foreign soldiers drink the coffee, thank the people for their hospitality and observe how dust and debris from the shelling has been neatly moved onto one side. Sant' Andrea is full of noise and children's laughter. Occasionally some of the more adventurous children get caught in the crossfire between the two warring armies, or stand on land mines whilst playing in the hills. Sant' Andrea thus experiences more noise, less children's laughter. If you listen very carefully in the night you might even hear some of the soldiers' cry.

### JEN

*HADAL ZONE: spans from depths of 6,000 metres (20,000 ft) to the ocean floor. Creatures in these areas must be able to live in complete darkness.*

Yis'ga'dal v'yis'kadash sh'may rabbo, b'olmo dee'vro chir'usay v'yamlich malchu'say, b'chayaychon uv'yomay'chon uv'chayay d'chol bais Yisroel, ba'agolo u'viz'man koriv; v'imru Omein.

Y'hay shmay rabbo m'vorach l'olam ul'olmay olmayo.

Yisborach v'yishtabach v'yispoar v'yisromam v'yismasay, v'yishador v'yis'aleh v'yis'alal, shmay d'kudsho, brich hu, l'aylo min kl birchoso v'sheeroso, tush'bechoso v'nechemoso, da,ameeran b'olmo; vimru Omein. Y'hay shlomo rabbo min sh'mayo, v'chayim alaynu v'al kol Yisroel; v'imru Omein.

Oseh sholom bimromov, hu ya'aseh sholom olaynu, v'al kol yisroel; vimru Omein.

**LENA** on desk number two LACROMA

The magnificent and highly diverse city of Lacroma boasts a few extraordinary tall celestial building named after mythological creatures and beastly characters. Medea, the daughter of King Aeetes of Colchis, niece of Circe, granddaughter of the sun god Helios and later wife to the hero Jason, with whom she had two children, Mermeros and Pheres, names one of the Lacroma towers: Medea Tower.

"The building is of reinforced concrete framed construction with in-situ reinforced concrete floors and beams, floors being finished with a quilted soundproof layer under thermoplastic floor tiling.... All floor levels are accessible from the one main staircase or alternatively via the two self-operated lifts provided, both of which are available to the lower ground floor and the upper ground floor, and then each serve alternative floors for the remaining floors of the building.

Spacious main entrance halls are provided at every floor, finished with granolithic floor tiles and wall surfaces are finished in a special cement-based paint in bright colours. Similar internal colour schemes have been used throughout each of the forty dwellings, and as an added attraction the walls of all living-rooms have been wall-papered to give a pleasant finish.

...

To hundreds of Lacroma families, moving into a tower block of flats means more than a change of house: it means a new way of life, a change in the habits of half a lifetime and a sudden jump to a higher standard of living.

Many of the inhabitants of Medea Tower come from the small, terraced houses in the smokey back streets of Meleda.

There, the families lived their lives horizontally. If they wanted a chat, they would go to the front door. If the children wanted to play, they would be a few hundred yards away at the most, in the street.

Life in Medea tower is vertical. There are four families to a floor and your next door neighbour of the past decade might be seven floors away.

The children – after they have outworn the thrill of lift-riding – will be 100 yards below you and not so easily on hand.

Life is quieter – the concrete floors and comparative seclusion see to that. Inevitably, the television comes into its own as symbolised by the giant aerial on top of Medea Tower.

For the first time in their lives, housewives are coping with modern aids they never had before in old-fashioned houses – electric points in all the rooms, electric cookers, built-in cupboards, rubber-tiled floors and electric lifts."

(taken from Liverpool Daily Post article 'Medea Tower - another feature in the changing face of Liverpool' 2nd November 1958)

Medea's children Mermeros and Pheres died at her mother's hands. Medea Tower is rumoured to be demolished as well.

**JEN**

*THE LITTORAL ZONE: the idea of the littoral zone is extended roughly to the edge of the continental shelf. Starting from the shoreline, the littoral zone begins at the spray region just above the high tide mark.*

It seems preposterous to me that in order to be able to stay in this country immigrants need to know things that your average person in the UK have absolutely no idea about. Buying an ice lollie for my daughter, I had to ask which one the Solero is, I needed to verify that it was the fruity on the outside creamy on the inside one. She was very nice about it, and then we began to joke that the Life in the UK test should ask migrants to identify the different types of ice lollies. This would be much more useful. To live in the UK we need to know the best free stuff in London, how to get the bus to actually stop for you, and how to order a pint. The woman did not know what percent of the population is an ethnic minority, the percentage less women make per hour than men, and the year that all women got the right to vote. Eight, Twenty and 1928 by the way. The thing is, that maybe it does prepare one for life in the UK and its outdated education system which stresses memorizing facts instead of pursuing knowledge, learning, and skills. Maybe, this horrible experience of cramming facts into my head, will prepare me to help my daughter with her GCSE's and A Levels. Or maybe I am being too optimistic and have to think to the earlier horrors that we are soon to endure when they test her intelligence at age 7! At least she is unlikely to be scarred for life by the 11 plus, which I have only heard about on the telly. I can't weigh in on the relative social advantages of grammar schools and comprehensives, I am still trying to get over the fact that they really expect children to start formal school at age 4.

**LENA** on desk number seven SCOGLI PETTINI

If you were ever to walk above the city of Lacroma you will find yourself in a place called Scogli Pettini. The land is barren and the air is cold. The winds blow all the time. The trees are scarce. The place is nicknamed

'King Lear's land' – the barren heath. The heath is not inhabitable. Very few people go by. Cars pull up on the parking lot early in the morning, the dog walkers greet each other begrudgingly, the parades are made in vain on Sundays and distressed flags can be found on the ground. Children play nasty games in the two playgrounds. Older children bully the younger ones. Some super naughty ones ride squad bikes. The scenery is serene when it snows, but that doesn't happen often enough.

## JEN

### LITTORAL

November 30th, 2010 by admin in General

I had a red velvet chair, and a matching red velvet sofa, it wasn't simply cheap furniture, it was free I try to remember where I got them, but all I recall is the position it occupied in my room overlooking the motorway.

My father called it the Roosevelt, or the Dan Ryan, or the Edens. This is how you can tell a carpet bagger, somebody who has moved to the city to make it, they use the numbers for the highways and never the names.

My father quizzed us. Chicago is a grid and every street has a number and a logic, we needed to know the logic to survive. My friend's father made her memorize the presidents and vice presidents in both chronological and alphabetical order. She is getting her phd now, and I'm on the dole.

I remember the words to Robert Frost poems, Martin Luther King's I have a dream speech, and Angel From Montgomery, they all blend together in my insomnia and I am 'An Old woman, named after my mother, who had a dreamt that on the red foot hills of Georgia her children's children would find two paths in a yellow wood'

My mother used recipes from magical 1970's cookbooks. The cookbooks are long gone and I attempt to use the magic of the internet to restore her memory, but nobody makes marble brownies any more.

She wrote things down and kept extremely banal travel journals that never revealed her interior life but were always highly legible. I have her passport holder, its faded red leather with her initials etched into it.

In the United States everybody has a car, and it is easy to find a couch in the alley, in England, it is impossible to move a settee into a Victorian Terraces and I try to remember every sofa that I have ever loved.

## LENA *on desk number nine MONTINVERNO*

Once upon a time there was a street called Mašere and Spasića. It was long. It was ambitious. It was nicknamed The Great Wall of China. It was in the city of Montinverno. The residents of Mašere and Spasića were strong, they loved the street, they took great pride in walking down their long street. The children rode their bicycles, the young girls walked hand in hand, the teenagers snogged each other on benches. The street was built for utilitarian living, with numerous blocks of flats and happy neighbours. Mašere and Spasića were named after two lieutenant commanders of the Royal Navy of the very much forgotten no longer existent country of the South Eastern Europe. Spasić and Mašera blew up a destroyer 'Zagabria' so that it would not fall into the hands of fascists. The lieutenant commanders sunk with the warship. However, Mašere and Spasića street is no longer named after them. Times have changed. Names as well.

I grew up on this street. I now live around the corner. jump down into the sea

# Prizes for the audience

## 'Life in the UK' test takers:

'Crossing California' by Adam Langer

'Invisible Cities' by Italo Calvino

'Travels in the Land of Kublai Khan' by Marco Polo

'Medea and other plays' by Euripides

'they Would Never Hurt A Fly' by Slavenka Drakulic

'The Road Not Taken and other poems' by Robert Frost

'Torvell and Dean Golden Moments' DVD

Peter Kosminsky's "Warriors" DVD

'Recovery' Eminem CD

'Fiddler on the Roof' CD

'Miss Sarajevo' CD



## Thank you

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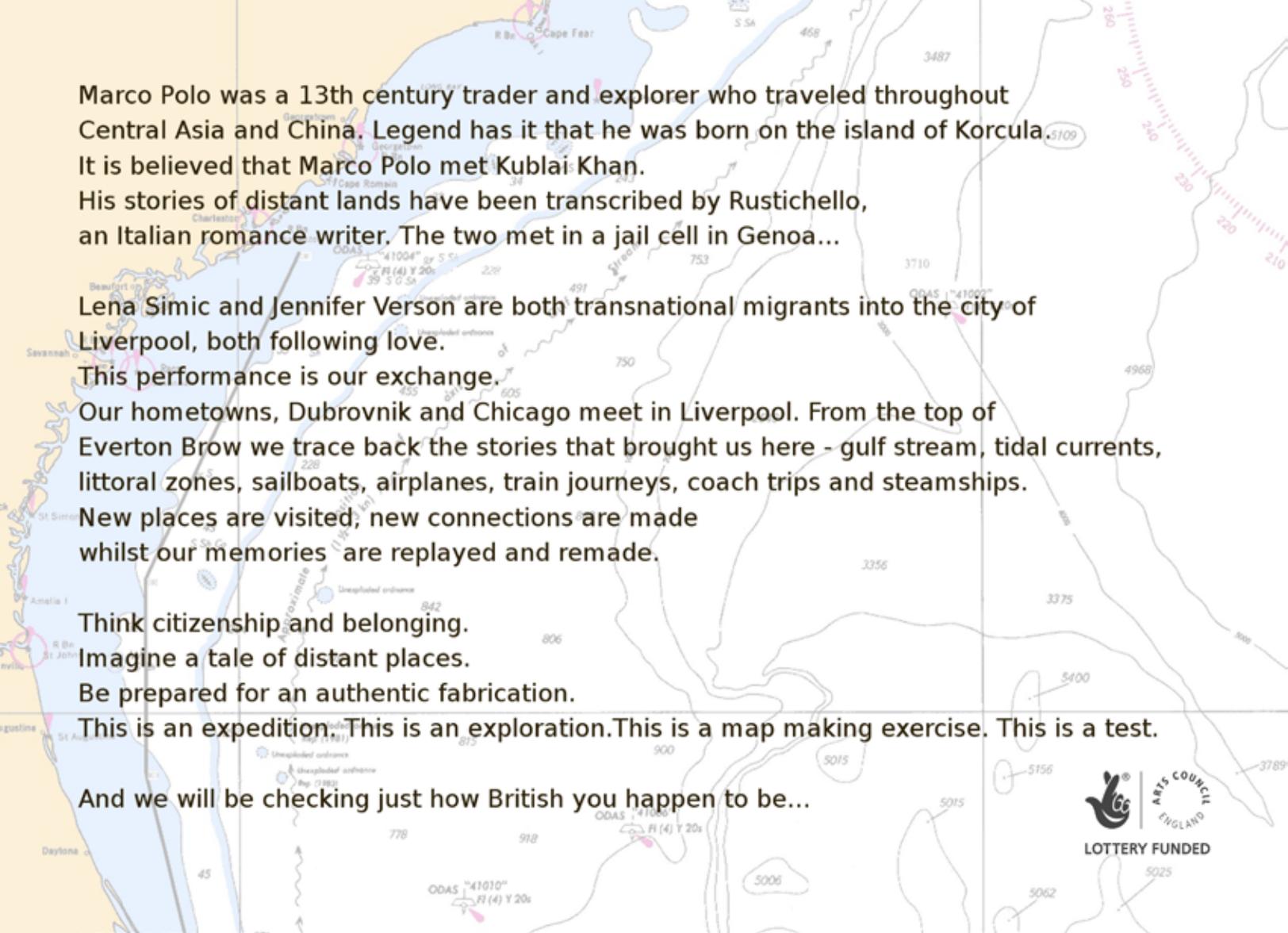
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A topographic map of the Savannah River region, showing the river and surrounding land with contour lines and place names like Savannah, Charleston, and Daytona. The map is overlaid with several paragraphs of text.

Marco Polo was a 13th century trader and explorer who traveled throughout Central Asia and China. Legend has it that he was born on the island of Korcula. It is believed that Marco Polo met Kublai Khan. His stories of distant lands have been transcribed by Rustichello, an Italian romance writer. The two met in a jail cell in Genoa...

Lena Simic and Jennifer Verson are both transnational migrants into the city of Liverpool, both following love. This performance is our exchange.

Our hometowns, Dubrovnik and Chicago meet in Liverpool. From the top of Everton Brow we trace back the stories that brought us here - gulf stream, tidal currents, littoral zones, sailboats, airplanes, train journeys, coach trips and steamships. New places are visited; new connections are made whilst our memories are replayed and remade.

Think citizenship and belonging. Imagine a tale of distant places. Be prepared for an authentic fabrication.

This is an expedition. This is an exploration. This is a map making exercise. This is a test.

And we will be checking just how British you happen to be...