



An Exhibition of Creative Recovery

WORLD

MAPPING MEMORIES

'UNDER' 20-23 June 2019 / Refugee Week
[behind KARST] 18 East St, Plymouth PL13NU

MAPPING MEMORIES



Remembering, Mapping, Layering and Recovering

We embarked on a journey of remembering and yearning for home and homeland and we arrived at a post recovery space; recovery from trauma, loss and grief through the act of mapping.

This exhibition catalogue is a culmination of the creative efforts of twelve courageous citizens from the refugee and asylum seeker community who have given their time and energy to become part of a participatory action research project led by Dr Sana Murrani, the founder of the Displacement Studies Research Network at the University of Plymouth. Creative Recovery: Mapping Refugees' Memories of Home as Heritage is a 14-month project funded by the European Cultural Foundation, Courageous Citizens 2018 and is in partnership with the British Red Cross, Plymouth branch.

Our twelve participants are our co-researchers. Our focus was on their memories and stories of home. In the aim of acting as a catalyst for social integration, the project provided the space for refugees and asylum seekers to tell their stories about their home and homeland the way they wish to tell them not how the media portray them. We started the process of constructing memories of home, through maps, drawings, and personal photographs, and soon discovered that this process is far from linear. The complexities of recovering and relating memories of home are as diverse and varied as the spaces and places in which the original events took place. After a while, we stopped speaking of 'home' as a specific geographic place and instead memories of the everyday replaced its physicality. Home then became a notion that each and every map conveyed differently. We found synergies between the recovery of memory and its spatial representation manifested in layers and overlays, collages, and different scales on maps. Each one of these maps represents a journey through time, scale and complexity.

Throughout the last ten months, our project photojournalist, Carey Marks, who joined us as a Creative Associate funded by the Sustainable Earth Institute at the University of Plymouth, photographed and re-photographed numerous portraits of our twelve protagonists. This process of re-photography complimented our processes of remembering, layering, and mapping which made our research personal and process driven.

Mapping is seen as the process of releasing the imagination. It oscillates between the acts of remembering, creating and archiving. Departing from Michel De Certeau's (1984) Spatial Stories, the maps in the exhibition trace and reframe the spatial stories of our participants' memories of their home-making practices. Rob Kitchin and Martin Dodge (2007) in their Rethinking Maps assert that maps are contingent, relational, and fleeing, produced while negotiating and re-territorialising with space and time. Creative Recovery utilised participatory informal mapping as a method for writing history and revealing intangible heritage to enable us to make sense of the future. The act of mapping facilitated the creation of alternative spaces of memory, or memoryscapes, that provide a valuable method of reclaiming a sense of recovery, integration and home-making in diaspora.



CREATIVE RECOVERY



Arzu (Azerbaijan)

I'm a human rights lawyer with 14 years of experience. I was the candidate for Parliament in 2010 when 7000 people voted for me. I was a lecturer at the Western University in Azerbaijan while working on various UN projects. I speak 5 languages and I'm the author of 2 books and 70 scientific articles. I have a PhD in human rights. I moved to the UK nearly a year ago with my daughter. I got my refugee status in March 2019. Now I have plans to improve my English and I have already started working on different projects with women and refugees. After that I'd like to study law (for a Masters degree) in the UK, but my aim in the future is to become a barrister in the UK. I'm happy that in a very short time I managed to integrate within the UK life, and have many friends from different countries. I feel very safe and I think it's becoming my second home. I no longer feel as homesick as I used to feel before.



THE
MAPS

CREATIVE RECOVERY



Basma (Iraq)

I graduated from Baghdad University Fine Arts with a Bachelors degree in 2005 but since then I haven't had the chance to practice my skills as a ceramicist nor touch any clay all these years because of my country's problems. Now I am here in the UK and this [Creative Recovery] is the first art project I get involved in. Happy to be part of this project, help each other and make my story heard.



**THE
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Deborah (Nigeria)

I escaped a dangerous situation in Lagos. I love going to church, singing and visiting my friends.



**THE
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Honey (Pakistan)

I love my city, Lahore. I have fond memories of Joyland, the zoo and Jina Park. The founder of Pakistan Quaid e Azam Muhammad Ali Jina, struggled very hard to make Pakistan the country for Muslim people and celebrate independence of Pakistan every year on the 14 August. I fell struggle follows Pakistanis wherever they go.



THE
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CREATIVE RECOVERY



Isatta (Sierra Leone)

I studied youth and community development at university. I am from Sierra Leone, the northern part of the country with beautiful landscape which is surrounded by hills and mountains like the Wara Wara mountain, Solar and Bintumany mountains. As a child, I grew up playing outside, enjoying the beautiful smell of fresh herbs and plants.

Most evenings, my siblings and I always take long walk to my grand parents' house for some TLC. I have very large family, including extended family from both parents. What I loved most was meeting up with all my cousin's during festive season as they will all travel from far and near to come to my parents' house and spend days sharing family meals together. Most of all, when we have relatives staying with us, as a sign of unity and love, my mother will dish our food in a large bowl for all the family to share, eating with our hands. This is very significant in our tradition. Since the war started in the 90s, my life had never been the same. I hope that the Land that We Love, Sierra Leone will create an equal opportunity – for everyone – regardless of their respective beliefs and opinions.



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CREATIVE RECOVERY



Maria (Honduras)

Honduras will always be my home. I am always very proud to represent and talk about my country wherever I go. Being a Honduran is a big part of my identity because I believe Honduran people are hard-working, joyful, caring and kind. I hope I can go back one day to change things and to improve our people's present and future. There is so much beauty it is truly unfair it can all be shadowed by the corruption and violence but I am hopeful that it will get better. I miss home very much: our food, our views and our warmth but I am very thankful to be here!

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Mahmoud (Syria)

I escaped from Syria. The fighting became too intense and one day an opportunity arose. Back home I was studying to become a doctor. Here I am a delivery driver. It sounds a big difference doesn't it?



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Mohammed (Palestine)

For me what I like the most about Gaza is how motivated Gazans are. They have never given up with all the destruction around them and they are not just trying to reconstruct their city but also the whole world. I wish in the future to set up an initiative to support real peace building for a sustainable world where each and everyone of us [humans] can live the life he/she wants, not a life we are forced to live in.



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Tarig (Sudan)

The east side of the River Nile witnessed my birth; in a historical city called Khartoum North. I grew up in a spacious house with yards opening against each other; in an extended family which surrounded me with constant and unconditional love. I grew up observing and spent most of my life in search for my voice, until I found film which became my voice. I recently graduated from a Film Studies Masters degree at London Film School. Now I make films mostly about unnoticed details of life; aspiring to make change, and one day I will.



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Trisha (Pakistan)

I love Karachi's food, beaches and shopping centres. My most wonderful memories are with my family when we used to sit in our living room and talk for hours or when we had to sit in our garden during the electricity blackouts. Most of my time in Pakistan revolved around my school and education, I remember my school's bus and our fun school trips. I wish I can help people around me and help make this world a better place for everyone despite their race, ethnicity, religion and social status!



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Waleed (Sudan)

I am a human rights activist and a former interior designer. I am a refugee from Khartoum. I love Khartoum and its lights and intellectual evenings of art, music and exhibitions. I am from a country torn apart by war... I wish to live in a world without weapons. A peaceful, kind and generous world.



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Zahra (Sri Lanka)

I loved and looked forward every weekend in my childhood to visit the golden sandy beach of Mount Lavinia. The smell of sea salt still lingers in my memory, collecting seashells was my favourite hobby, and thirst-quenching king coconut trees that I'm still longing to taste. I travel back to my golden memories I have treasured in my heart, and feel how lucky I was to be born there. Those memories still make me happy even now, when everything seems blue around me.



I loved & looked forward every weekend in my childhood to walk to the golden Sandy beach. The smell of the sea still lingers in my memory. Those peaceful, carefree moments of my ^{early} life time that I love most, the pathway full of coconut & King coconut trees bushes of hibiscus here & there. The romantic Sunset which captures glory of ^{the} evening. It invites fall of the starry night, chatting & laughing until late night with my mom & cousins in balcony. I witnessed wildlife. I witnessed the beauty of the all fresh ^{over-green} nature, the warmth of sunlight which brightens ~~our~~ lives to this date, will not mine. I am far from them.

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Special thanks from Creative Recovery to:

All Participants

European Cultural Foundation (Funder)

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Sustainable Earth Institute

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Dr Sana Murrani (Principal Investigator)

Jordan Beh (Research Assistant)

Carey Marks (Creative Associate)

Dr Helen Lloyd (Researcher)

Professor Michael Punt (Research Mentor)

Richard Wells (Research Assistant)

Dawn Melville and team at UNDER

Exhibition Opening Hours:

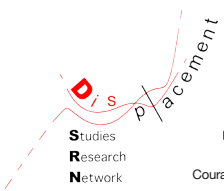
Thursday 20 June

(Opening Night and Open Conversation): 17:00-20:00

Friday 21 June: 10:00-16:00

Saturday 22 June: 10:00-16:00

Sunday 23 June: 10:00-15:00



Studies
Research
Network



mappingcreativerecovery.org