



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

News Release

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Refugees' music and verse puts flight to freedom centre stage

Displaced poets and musicians will join hundreds of primary pupils this weekend in a concert that highlights the plight of refugees.

The event in the University of Edinburgh's historic Old College quadrangle is inspired by a poem written by a refugee who perished in the Mediterranean.

Postcards from our World will use song, spoken word and video installations to recount the treacherous journeys families are taking to reach safety.

The performance, which runs 5-6 March, will use songs from South Africa, Syria and the Balkans. A key feature of the event will be a spectacular 15ft boat that will be constructed in the Quad.

The promenade concert will move audiences around the Quad before being taken into the adjacent Playfair Library.

Organised by the University's Music in the Community programme, it will feature a performance by Mohammed Nafee, a singer and musician from Iraq. Performance poet Ghazi Hussein, exiled from Palestine after years of imprisonment and torture, will also perform.

More than 100 pupils from Leith Walk Primary School – one of Edinburgh's most diverse schools – will form the chorus. Nearly half of the pupils at the school are bilingual, speaking 25 different languages.

The pupils were sent postcards from their families and friends around the world, describing their daily life. The letters inspired several new pieces of work within the performance.

Composer and performer Dee Isaacs has written new music for the event. The event also features new commissions from poet Elspeth Murry and filmmaker Ian Dodds.

Ms. Isaacs, who is leader of the Music in the Community programme, said: "This work acknowledges the wonder of other cultures and people. Everyone is able to contribute to our collective heritage, the human repertoire of ideas and beliefs. Culture alone allows us to reach, as Abraham Lincoln said, 'for the better angels of our nature'."

Ranked among the top universities in the world

Ghazi Hussein said: “If I still remained in my place of birth, my voice would be silenced. Here in Scotland I have the opportunity to tell my story, one which I believe is important and relevant to what is happening across the world at this time.”

Postcards from our World begins at 7.30pm each night. Tickets are £7 for adults, £5 for children. They are available from Brown Paper Tickets:

<http://www.brownpapertickets.com/event/2489809>

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