



O Patrin

The Way

RESOURCE PACK

Polygon Arts, Romany Theatre Company & Border Crossings Education
Presented as part of Origins: Festival of First Nations

O Patrin (The Way)

Written and directed by Dan Allum



Border Crossings



Funded by:



With thanks to:

Company members of Taki Rua, Yirra Yakin, Native Earth & Native Voices
Isaac Blake and Eva Ruszoova
Jake Bowers
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Resource Pack compiled by
Gabrielle Lobb, Director – Polygon Arts

Polygon Arts provides opportunities through the arts for people
to participate fully in the life of their communities.

www.polygonarts.org.uk

Searching for The Way Michael Walling

Origins: Festival of First Nations caused a full-blooded race war on the Guardian website earlier this year. One of the particular bones of contention was that we had chosen, as part of the Festival, to work with the Romany Theatre Company. Roma, one contributor remarked, are by definition the antithesis of indigenous, and their involvement amounted to a fit of politically correct insanity¹.

This was one reason why we deliberately did not call Origins an “indigenous” festival, but chose instead the Canadian term “First Nations”. Maori, after all, are not indigenous to Aotearoa / New Zealand: they only arrived there some four centuries ago. Native Americans, it is believed, probably migrated from Asia. Even the Aboriginal Australians, some 50,000 years ago, seem to have travelled from what is now Southern India. It all depends on where you draw the line. We were not interested in a doctrinaire definition of the indigenous so much as shared experiences of oral cultures, marginalisation, hurt in the memory, and (above all) ways of living in community and in relation to nature which are more sustainable than our own. Viewed like this, the Romany experience and culture sits very close to those of the other nations with whom we have been working. As Jay Griffiths put it in the Origins programme book: “A more generous but unmeasurable definition [of the indigenous] is those who have stayed faithful to their land – suggesting that to be an indigenous human being is earnable, and in that there is grace.”

Certainly the First Nations artists who performed at Origins welcomed the Romany Theatre Company into the global community of First Nations. Each company came together with Dan Allum and his performers, and with Polygon Arts, to share and

communicate through theatre the histories that have brought them to where they stand today, the culture and wisdom that sustains them, the ways of living they hope to pass on. These sharings were powerful, galvanising experiences on both sides; cultural encounters from which all the artists emerged strengthened and informed, validated and empowered. We understand our own culture better when we see it mirrored in another: when you look in the mirror you see something which is like you, but different; what there is in common, and what is distinct.

These workshops were, of course, processes of learning through participation; and it is from them that the next stage of our participation and learning programme has grown. As with the workshops, the production of *O Patrin (The Way)* is a cross-cultural encounter in which both the performers and their audience of young people will participate, and through participation learn and grow. We are not evangelising for the Roma culture, nor are we saying that their Way is the only way – but we are offering this culture and its own response to other cultures as a space in which modern young people can find alternatives to the creative barrenness and environmental unsustainability of contemporary existence. What they learn, they can perhaps begin to incorporate into their own lives, and so pass on in a further process of learning through participation.

In such encounters, the seeds of global change are planted.

Michael Walling is Artistic Director of Border Crossings and the Director of Origins: Festival of First Nations.

www.bordercrossings.org.uk

www.originsfestival.com

¹ See <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/may/07/art-aborigines>. The comment relating to Romany people has now been removed from this site by a moderator, presumably on the grounds of racism.

Finding The Way Dan Allum

During the Origins Festival in London earlier this year we, the Romany Theatre Company (RTC), alongside Polygon Arts, collaborated with theatre companies from New Zealand, Canada, Australia and the USA with the intention of devising a new play about what are sometimes called peoples of the First Nations. These companies celebrate the histories and heritage of the Maori, Aboriginal, Native American and Native Canadian peoples, while we at RTC celebrate the history and heritage of Romany Gypsies from around the world. We found the process itself absolutely fascinating – meeting and learning from members of these cultures, being taken into their confidence, hearing some of their amazing stories, learning of their beliefs and cultural pasts was both an honour and an inspiration.

The play, O'Patrin (The Way), is the result of these collaborations.

The play, which is accompanied by workshops, aims to educate Romany people and members of wider society in the Romany Gypsy culture by examining the cultural significance of language, land relations, cultural definitions, oral culture and continuity, themes which are shared by the peoples from around the world who we worked with. The play features some rarely heard Romani language and focuses on aspects of history and identity, providing new opportunities for those involved in the performance as well as those watching it to learn about and better understand these rich, diverse and yet shared cultures.

We hope you get as much fun, enjoyment and learning from watching the play and taking part in the workshops, as we did devising them.

Dan Allum is Director of the Romany Theatre Company

The Romany Theatre Company (RTC)

Set up in 2003 by Dan Allum, RTC is the only Romany Gypsy led Theatre Company in the UK.

From their first short film, *Best Days Of Our Lives* about Roma youth, they've gone on to work and create many productions in theatre, radio and short films including: *Our Big Land*, a theatre production about the history of Gypsies which toured nationally; *Killimengro (The Dancer)* which featured an International Roma cast; *The Ursitory* featuring Roma youth; a Video/seminar *A Gypsy's Wish* which was short-listed for the Institute of Public Relations award; and *Romano Drom*, a Gypsy documentary that was broadcast on BBC radio.

The BBC is currently broadcasting the second of three 12-part radio drama series called *Atching Tan* produced by the Romany Theatre Company.

RTC are also an accredited training organization with close links to Roma organizations around Europe, and The Royal Court Theatre in London.

www.romanytheatrecompany.com



**Dan Allum, O Patrin
writer/director, in
rehearsals**

O Patrin Company Members

Rachel Drazek – Actor (Athalia)

“I first became involved with The Romany Theatre Company as part of the Origins festival, which took place earlier this year. Although I am not from a Romany background myself I have a real interest in the culture, wanting to learn and understand as much as possible; including why so much prejudice exists. I am delighted to be involved in O Patrin, which is my first theatre job with the company. In October the second series of a traveller radio drama written by the company will be aired on the BBC, in which I play a young eastern European Gypsy. O Patrin and Origins festival have allowed me a huge insight not only into Romany Gypsy culture, but also many other First Nation cultures from around the globe. This was a unique experience and taught me many things about the globalisation of marginalized peoples – and the similarities of these situations. It also acted as a celebration for the differences of these traditional cultures; their beliefs, their music and their histories, but recognised at the heart of these strong common themes.”

Sarah Miller – Musician

“I'm a singer and musician (flute, whistles, mandolin, ukulele etc), who graduated with a BMus in Folk and Traditional Music two years ago as a mature student. I'm from a mixed background – Romany Traveller, Irish Traveller, Northumbrian. This is the first time I have been involved with Romany Theatre Company and it's one of the best things I have ever done. I think it's fate. I am inspired and constantly learning through this project, and hopefully the people we meet are too. I fully support the work we are doing and think that this form of education is very important.”

Candis Nergaard – Actor (Femi)

“Hi, my name's Candis, I am a Romany Traveller from the Kent area. I have worked with the Romany Theatre Company on various projects over the past few years including the first ever Traveller radio drama for the BBC, called 'Atching Tan'. I was also involved in some of the writing for the last series. I really support this project, 'O Patrin', as I feel there has been a lack of education around Romanys and Travellers in schools for a very long time. During this project I met some people from cultures I had never really heard much about including Maori, Aboriginal and Native Americans, I really enjoyed the exchange we had and discussing similarities between us all. Hopefully this project will lead to more inclusive learning.”

Fiona Rae – Movement Director

“O Patrin has many layers with a new one revealing itself each time we explored the play and the movement needed to honour the heritage and tradition of a story born from so many others.” As a movement director and choreographer recent credits include:
Holoray Holiday (Grimeborn, The Arcola), Fish (Camden People's Theatre), The Marilyn Monroe Show (Brighton Festival). For Central School of Speech and Drama, The Tempest, Three Sisters, Brecht Fest' (Embassy Theatre). Fiona has taught dance and movement at Mountview, GSA, Central and The Bridge. Training: at Central School of Speech and Drama – MA in Movement Studies and London Studio Centre – BA (Hons) in Theatre Dance.

Brief History

Gypsy people originally descend from tribes in India who migrated in the Middle Ages, arriving in Britain in the 15th Century. The term Gypsy was given to them at that time and came from the mistaken idea that they had originated from Egypt. Many Gypsies still maintain aspects of their Romani language, which itself has roots in Sanskrit. They have a very strong sense of culture, religion and traditions and strive to follow them whenever possible.

Gypsies are defined as an ethnic minority group by the Race Relations Act (1976) as their home lifestyle is significantly different to that of the majority settled community.

The first authenticated records of their presence in Britain are in 1505 in Scotland. The first authenticated record in England is in 1514. Life was hard for the Gypsy people in Europe before 1500. Laws were passed to expel Gypsies from Spain and Switzerland, and by 1650 most Gypsy people were slaves.

In England under Queen Elizabeth I Gypsies were expelled along with all freed black slaves. Laws were passed condemning all Gypsies to death. When people were out of work, prices high and peasants were thrown off the land, it was the usual story of looking for someone to blame. Strangers make good scapegoats. In York in 1596 magistrates made children watch while their parents were hanged just because they were Gypsies.

After 1780, anti Gypsy legislation was gradually repealed. Gypsy people became a useful source of cheap labour in the fields, blacksmiths and as entertainers. Gypsies have always survived on the margins of society.

After the mechanisation of farming, the lifestyle of Gypsies changed drastically. Not wanted for hop or strawberry picking and other traditional trades, the people found that they had to adapt, again work was difficult to find for some families and the motorisation of families also changed the travel patterns.

The mechanisation of the traditional rural work started in the 1950s. The previous sources of livelihood did not provide sufficiently in the rural areas anymore. With industrialisation started the migration from rural areas. The changes in society were also reflected in the Romany Gypsy population. Many Gypsies moved from the rural areas to the cities and towns.

Over the past decades the material well-being of some Travellers has improved but there are various issues that have been identified and need addressing, for example the unusually high mortality rate and the fact that the life expectancy of Traveller men is 10 years less than the national average and 12 years less for Traveller women.

Legislation in Ireland brought about a bigger increase of Irish Travellers in England in the 1960s.

Over the years there has been a wide range of legislative measures, which have attempted to stop Romani people and Irish Travellers from leading a nomadic way of life and therefore from actually existing.

Measures date back as far as 1530 with the introduction of the "Egyptians Act", which was a ban on the immigration of Gypsies and also expelled those already in England. More recent examples of legislation include:

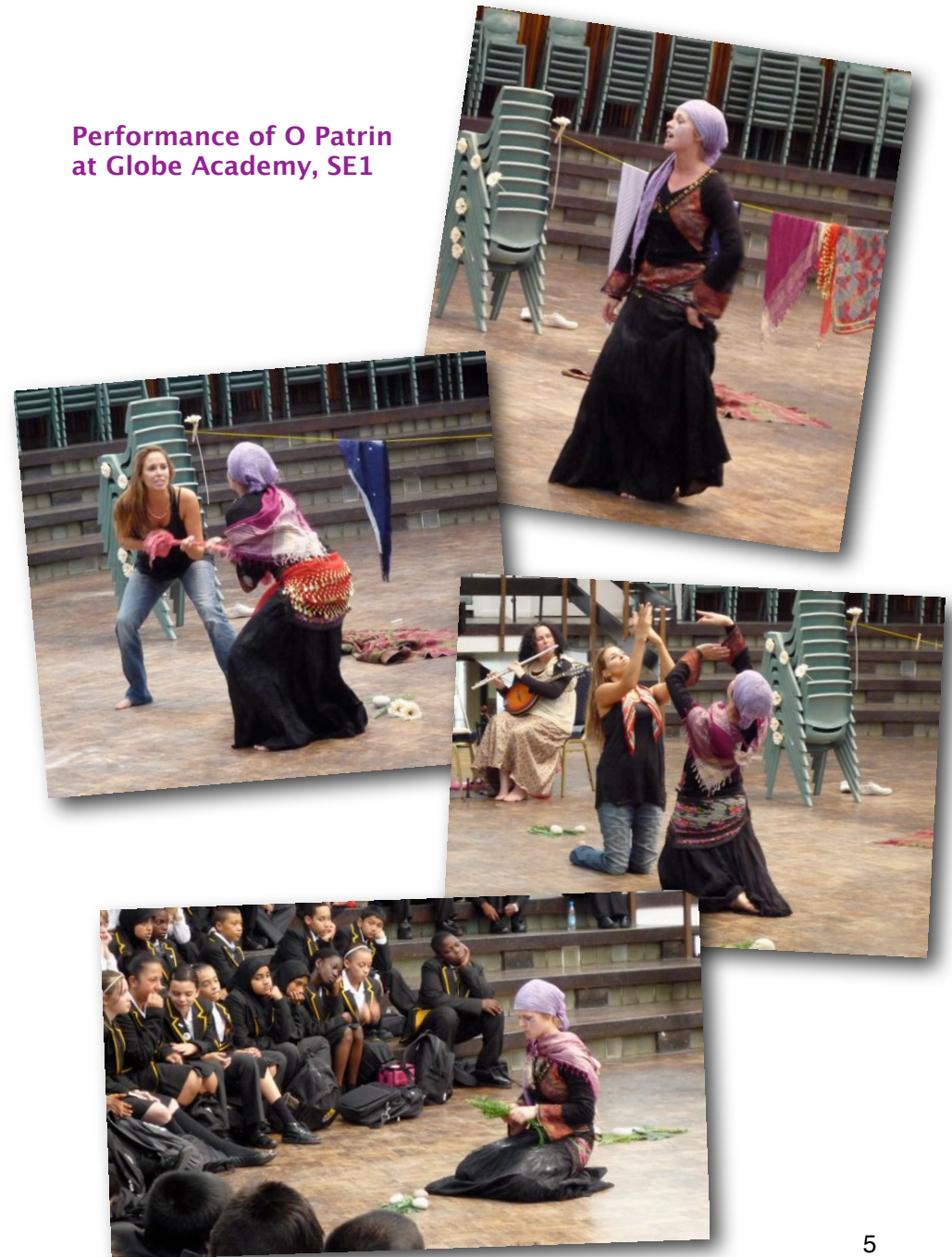
Highway and Byways Act 1959, which effectively criminalized the Travelling life overnight as families were not allowed to stop on the side of the road.

The Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act of 1960. Many families who had got to know farmers over the years were displaced by this act, since farmers could no longer allow them to stay on their land, as they became eligible for fines if they technically ran a site without a valid site licence.

The 1968 Caravan Site Act led to the creation of sites by the local authorities, but unfortunately many authorities flouted the law and did not build the sites that were needed.

The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 swept the 1968 Caravan Sites Act away, again criminalizing this way of life. This Act also gave the Police increased powers including the right to impound vehicles if there were more than six. Guidelines issued to local authorities emphasised that before an eviction was carried out, health, educational and social needs must be taken into account.

Performance of O Patrin at Globe Academy, SE1



Background of First Nations Theatre Companies

TAKI RUA

Back in the early 80s, writers like Hone Kouka and Apirana Taylor found a way to combine the protocols of the marae and western theatre to articulate Maori and Pakeha issues in a way that was sophisticated, gutsy and politically savvy: they called it marae theatre because it so effectively combined the two. Back then, the combination took place in a physical venue in Wellington's theatre precinct and was called the New Depot. In 1991 the New Depot changed its name to Taki Rua – Depot Theatre, reflecting a commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi and the partnership between Maori and Pakeha.

In 1997, the name became Taki Rua Productions and we liberated ourselves from the obligations of a performance venue. We focused instead on what we considered to be most important: commissioning, producing and touring original New Zealand work. Taki Rua Productions serves the community by providing theatre in te reo Maori to schools, kura kaupapa and kohanga reo, script and professional development opportunities, as well as workshops for emerging writers.

Our theatre tours in Maori and English bring us into direct contact with New Zealand's young people and new audiences who are often unable to experience professional theatre. Taki Rua Productions believes strongly in nurturing a bicultural theatre audience for the future.

“The plays of Taki Rua have done as much as any historian or documentary maker – and more than most – to illustrate life in NZ ... In fact, I count them among the clearest, most illuminated and positive examples of Pakeha and Maori crossovers I've ever encountered.” – James Littlewood, Film, Television & Media, Auckland University

Native Earth Performing Arts is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the creating, developing and producing of professional artistic expression of the Aboriginal experience in Canada.

Through stage productions (theatre, dance and multi-disciplinary), new script development, apprenticeships and internships, Native Earth seeks to fulfill a community of artistic visions. It is a vision that is inclusive and reflective of the artistic directions of members of the Aboriginal community who actively participate in the arts.

Artistic Mandate

Native Earth Performing Arts Inc. (NEPA Inc.) is dedicated to the expression of the Native experience through theatre arts. Its mandate is:

- to provide a base for professional Native performers, writers, technicians and other artists
- to encourage the use of theatre as a form of communication within the Native community, including the use of Native languages
- to communicate to our audiences the experiences that are unique to Native people in contemporary society
- to contribute to the further development of theatre in Canada.

Native Earth is a member of the Professional Association of Canadian Theatres and engages with the Canadian Actors Equity Association under the terms of the Canadian Theatre Agreement.

In service to our mandate and mission, the company operates according to 7 traditional principles which inform decisions in all undertakings. It is our belief that these tenets not only honour Aboriginal values, but are universal to all cultures in various manifestations.

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------|
| Courage | Patience |
| Generosity | Humility |
| Tolerance | Wisdom |
| Strength of Character | |

History of Yirra Yaakin Aboriginal Corporation

The company was initiated in 1993 by an Aboriginal Steering Committee responding to demand from Aboriginal youth to take part in ongoing Youth Theatre programs. This demand was fuelled by one-off projects undertaken by the WA Theatre Company and Acting Out (Barking Gecko). Outreach community performance projects were undertaken using access, participation and equity as the guiding principles. There was a concurrent strong focus on staff training and the development of Indigenous artists. By the end of 1995 the company was Incorporated, the name Yirra Yaakin had been launched and the Board appointed David Milroy as the first Artistic Director. Pressure from the community meant work was no longer youth-specific, but community wide incorporating artforms other than theatre.

The growth and stability of this model led Aboriginal actors to increasingly ask Yirra Yaakin to respond to the success of Aboriginal Theatre presented by non-Aboriginal companies and in 1997, the first professional program was launched. Pressure on the company to continue to produce new work meant artist development became a priority, with writers' development programs, closer ties with Interstate colleagues (BlakStage) and a partnership with WAAPA all undertaken.

By 2001 the company was presenting more new work than any other company in WA, but felt its community roots were in danger. A significant new issue based stream was launched to tour professional work to communities Statewide for free. This KUTTA KUTTA stream would soon attract Health, Justice and Welfare interest, with significant funding often underpinning other artistic programs.

In late 2003 Sam Cook was appointed Executive Producer and has given the company a Global focus, taking authentic Indigenous experiences to six continents and forging relationships and affirming our voice within the greater arts community. The Education program has also flourished in the past four years, with

Yirra Yaakin now the first point of Indigenous cultural contact for WA school children.

In 2008, Yirra Yaakin is Australia's leading Indigenous theatre company, winning awards for its Theatre, its Governance and its Partnerships. In fifteen years the company has delivered 36 new works, employed over 500 Aboriginal theatre workers and reached over 400,000 audience and participants. It has also kept true to a vision of Aboriginal control and self-determination, ensuring Aboriginal artists and community have a voice in all levels of creation and production.

Native Voices at the Autry is devoted to developing and producing new works for the stage by Native American playwrights. It was established in 1999 to provide a supportive and collaborative setting for Native American playwrights and actors from across the U.S. and Canada to both develop their work and see it fully realized. Since 1999, Native Voices has produced *Urban Tattoo*, *Jump Kiss*, *The Buz'Gem Blues*, *Please Do Not Touch the Indians*, *Kino & Teresa*, *Stone Heart*, *The Red Road*, *The Berlin Blues*, *SUPER INDIAN*, and *Teaching Disco Square Dancing to Our Elders: A Class Presentation*. In addition, Native Voices has held over 70 workshops and public staged readings of new plays by Native American playwrights featuring Native American actors.

Native Voices at the Autry produces under an Equity contract and is a member of LA Stage Alliance; a member theater of TYA/USA, the national organization for Theater for Young Audiences; and a Constituent of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theater.

O Patrin Discussion Questions

Who or what is Athalia?

Is she real? Where does she come from?

Why does Femi call Athalia?

Why has Femi decided to confront these questions now?

How does she eventually make her decision?

What is the journey of each character as the play proceeds?

What are Mum's concerns for Jennie?

What are Athalia's concerns for Femi?

Are their concerns justified?

What motivates these concerns?

How can we learn from what Femi went through to help us with our own challenges?

Can we bring Athalia and Femi back together?

What is Femi left with?

Who owns history?

How can the past and present make friends?

How do you preserve culture?

Significant/symbolic objects & ideas for discussion/research

Specific to Romany Gypsy culture:

Scarves

Wooden pegs

Colours of Gypsy Flag – blue, green and red

Washing line

Gypsy site

Shared with First Nations cultures:

Trees

Circles

Painted skin

Wisdom of ancestors

Language

Stones

School, education vs traditional knowledge and skills

Environment – watching over the earth, doesn't belong to us

Bathing cleansing ritual

Traditional dance

Workshop Activities

O Patrin is an allegory for universal experience, with specific cultural details – showcasing Romany heritage. Femi, although she is Romany Gypsy girl, faces the same challenges as we all do.

Q What do you think her challenges are?

(forming her own identity, transitions, struggling with reconciling respect for elders with own ambitions/ideas, able/unable to reject the past – be that tradition, religion, family expectations, culture)

1. Diversity Game – get into groups with people who have:

Same number of siblings as you...
Birthday in the same month as you...
Same kind of pet as you... (or no pet)
Same favourite food as you...
Similar height to you...

Reflect on why this game played

(good to move around, break the ice, also find out about things that connect us/similarities – as between the community groups involved in the project)

Did you find out something new about someone/a connection you didn't know you had with someone?

2. Word association game – in pairs – start with a word to do with the play eg: stone, scarf, peg etc

Reflect on this game and what it means when it features in the play

(spontaneity, speed, no time to 'self-edit' - in the play means that characters' innermost thoughts are revealed, an honesty and truth emerges)

3. 'Inheritance Tracks' activity – in pairs

Before and during the collaborations with First Nations companies, we thought carefully about the implications and responsibility of

telling another person's story. This activity also introduces the idea of our connection to the past and the future.

Q What do we need to consider when telling another's story?

(Respect & honour for their story; listen carefully to remain true to details and feeling of story; everything shared treated as sacred etc)

Each person thinks of two songs:

One song that reminds them of their past *(a memory, a special person in their life, a particular place etc)*

Second song – one they would pass on to their children (or leave for future generations in a time capsule) *(perhaps a message that they agree with, or tells something about them as an individual - not just their favourite song of the moment!)*

Each person tells their partner their two songs and their reasons

Bring class back together

Recap 'rules' for telling another person's story

Invite some volunteers to tell their partners songs and reasons

4. Tableaux – in groups of 5 or 6

Take a theme from the play and create a tableaux to represent your group's interpretation of that theme *(eg: community; independence)*

or

Give each group one of the words below

Education	Environment	Media
Community	Language/communication	

Step 1 – create a tableau of something they would reject from this generation (connected to their word) and create a tableau to show the consequences of rejecting that idea.

Step 2 – create a tableau of something they would carry forward from this generation (connected to their word) and create a tableau to show the consequences of carrying forward that idea.

History curriculum links

Key Concepts:

Cultural, ethnic and religious diversity; Cause and consequence; Significance

Range and content:

British History

the impact through time of the movement and settlement of diverse peoples to, from and within the British Isles

European & World History

the changing nature of conflict and cooperation between countries and peoples and its lasting impact on national, ethnic, racial, cultural or religious issues, including the nature and impact of the two world wars and the Holocaust, and the role of European and international institutions in resolving conflicts

(refer to excerpts 1 & 2)

Snapshots of collaborative workshops with visiting First Nations companies



Excerpt 1:

FEMI: Stories of our people.

ATHALIA: We are two thousand years old. Born in India, our language from Sanskrit. We make our way to Middle East fifteen hundred years ago, and one thousand years later go out to the Balkans and Europe.

FEMI: *(to audience)* We got to this country about five hundred years ago.

Slight pause.

FEMI: And here we are.

ATHALIA: And here WE are.

FEMI: Roads and journeys.

ATHALIA. Journeys and roads.

FEMI: Clocks and spaces.

ATHALIA: Time to come...

Music stops. ATHALIA takes stones from a bucket and begins putting them in a circle.

FEMI: *(to audience)* Some of my ancestors used to sleep with stones around them to keep them safe and ward off evil spirits. Other peoples even put stones on graves and not flowers. How funny. I've heard some people swallow stones or tie them around the past and throw them in the river, letting it sink to the bottom.

ATHALIA: But the past is with us always.

Excerpt 2:

ATHALIA: We only watch over this earth. We care. For it is existent, living by its self. It is not to be conquered, bought, sold, fought over or possessed. And neither are its peoples. But in years past the Gadge came and took away our freedom, our right to travel the land. They forbid us to speak our language, to sing and dance. They hang our men and steal our babies. They shave the heads of the women and burn our cheeks to mark us as Gypsies!

Silence.

FEMI: It was the past.

ATHALIA: And today across the world we are despised, spat on in the street, forced to live in poverty.

Slight pause.

ATHALIA: Tell me Femi, how much Gypsy is left in you?

FEMI: As much as you.

ATHALIA: You are white.

FEMI looks at her hand.

FEMI: Almost.

ATHALIA: (*proud*) I am full blood.

FEMI: Because you're-

ATHALIA: Black is the true Gypsy colour. When we first came to this

country... you are so lucky you don't look like me. My mother she...

ATHALIA glances across at FEMI.

ATHALIA: How do you wash, Femi?

FEMI shakes her head and turns away.

FEMI: I don't want this.

ATHALIA: You would stay blind? You are moving far from our rivers of tradition.

FEMI: I feel like a river sometimes. Like a blood river, filled with bloody tears.

ATHALIA: You have cut yourself off from us. You won't find your way back by crying tears of blood.

ATHALIA kneels down in the circle. FEMI watches her for a moment then moves behind her with the bucket. FEMI begins to wash ATHALIA, rubbing her face gently at first.

ATHALIA: When I am young the colour of our skin determines how much Gypsy we are. If we are white the Gadge will leave our children. But if we are not...

FEMI scrubs her face harder but the color doesn't come off ATHALIA's skin.

FEMI: The water runs clear, but the colour won't wash! The water runs clear but...

ATHALIA: ...the colour won't wash.

FEMI brings out some white powder from the bucket and in desperation puts it on ATHALIA'S face, arms and legs which grotesquely changes her appearance. At the end FEMI looks at what she has done to ATHALIA in fear and horror.

ATHALIA: And so the Gypsy children must to be taken from their parents and given to good Christians.

Pause

ATHALIA: Now let me wash you, Femi. In the river of our people.

ATHALIA reaches out her hand.

ATHALIA: Come to me. Come to me now.

FEMI goes to her but remains outside the circle of stones. FEMI and ATHALIA begin a hair washing sequence as if in a river's reflection using the function of water to compare past and present. During the movement the connection between the two is strong at first, then FEMI leaves ATHALIA in the river, as if leaving the past in behind.

Geography curriculum links

Key concept:

Cultural understanding and diversity

Range and content:

a variety of scales, from personal, local, regional, national, international and continental, to global

a range of investigations, focusing on places, themes or issues interactions between people and their environments, including causes and consequences of these interactions, and how to plan for and manage their future impact.

(refer to excerpts 3 & 4)

Snapshots of collaborative workshops with visiting First Nations companies



Excerpt 3:

FEMI: *(to audience)* My people used to mark out places where we'd been or where we were going. You know, places of significance, a kind of Gypsy trail. Handfuls of leaves or grass would be left on the roadside in secret patterns to give directions to other Travellers to follow. Later on it turned into different symbols to show life's meanings. We called it, O Patrin. The Way.

Music starts to play.

FEMI: *(to audience)* We'd write births and deaths on trees an'all. We'd use 'em for signposts, road maps and diaries sort of thing. Trees are very sacred to my people. They'd shelter us from the wind when it blew hard and fierce. They'd keep us dry when it rained. And warm when it was cold.

FEMI looks at the flute player and smiles.

FEMI: *(to audience)* I remember when I first tried to play the flute. Athalia said-

ATHALIA: Sit under tree, miro odjus Romani chi *(my beautiful Gypsy girl)* Listen to tree. Feel its warmth, learn its secret language and the tree will teach you. Everything is bearable with music.

Excerpt 4:

FEMI: *(to audience)* Who really owns our past, our history? I mean my people's? Do we? Or do you? Does anyone? Who owns yours?

ATHALIA: The earth. In the end.

Music plays again and ATHALIA begins to dance around the stones, twigs, leaves and grass.

ATHALIA: *(moving down to the earth)* For the earth, it is alive. Touch it, feel its power. We dance together.



Snapshots of collaborative workshops with visiting First Nations companies

Poem and Songs Featured in the Play

The Breath of Life (Gypsy/Maori) by Rob Mokaraka (Taki Rua)

A spiritual thread weaves us together,
A common heart keeps us together,
Worlds away,
Yet here to stay,
You am I
and I am you.
This thread is strong yet tender
For a vulnerable state we must enter,
My nose upon yours,
My head touches yours,
We breathe together
For this special moment
We are one,
Brief yet present
Gentle yet deep
A spiritual thread weaves us together.

Kai Tute

Kai tute, why aren't tute sar mandi?
Sikkur amande kai mandi am.
Sikkur amande so am.
Please chiv abri o flames...
adrey miro stirapen of yog...
ta lel amande doomo cati miro sueti...
lel amande doomo cato miro rat...

Where are you... why aren't you with
me?
Show me where I am.
Show me... who I am.
Please, put out the flames...
In my prison of fire...
And take me back to my people...
Take me back... to my blood...

Honour

Patsliv tumenge oh Ramale.
Mashkar le gajende oh gajende.
Tepotshinen penge la jav.
May shordjol muro rat.

Honour to you Romani people
Among the gadje oh gadje people
While they reward themselves
I feel shame, that spills my blood

Pabaven mage memelia,
May patshivalo sar o tshatshimo,
Prohssar man opre priend,
Sa muro djuben semas.

Burn candles for me
That honours me by the truth
Bury me on my feet
All my life I've been on my knees

Do You Still Care?

Did you smell the flower, he gave you yesterday?
Or did you just put it in a secret place, and hide it away?
Did you find the scent, just carried you away?
Or did you still remain in the same old place that I left you?

Yes I know you are waiting, still anticipating.
That this new man will change your life, you'll be the happy wife.

But do you still care?
Do you still care for me?
I care for you.
Do you still care for me?
I care for you.

So now it's all over. And you don't want me no more.
You had me for a while but then you just got tired of me.
You didn't give no reasons, I know that's not your style.
You just wanted someone to play with for a while.

And now you've gone to another place, looking for somebody new to take my place.
That would be easy for you, if you wanted to.

But do you still care?
Do you still care for me?
I care for you.
Do you still care for me?
I care for you.

And all those lies you told me. Femi you had me sold.
But you'll take me back, I'll give you one more chance.

Do you still care?
Do you still care for me?
I care for you.
Do you still care for me?
I care for you.



Snapshots of collaborative workshops with visiting First Nations companies

How Do You Think It Feels?

You keep asking me what's wrong and I, I try to tell you.
I don't ask that much from you now and I, I don't want to.

I just, just don't see what's wrong with that,
and I never promised you I know where's it's at.
But you keep asking me what's wrong but now tell me, tell me...

How do you think, how do you think it feels?
How do you think it feels?
That I could travel round the world and fight
or just stay with him and I'll be all right.
So tell me, how do you think it feels?

Now you can take what you want from me, I'll always have more
to give.
And I'm going to remain the same. Cos to be alive you've got to
live.

You can take it right on time,
open up the door and you will find.
A girl out here waiting for you.
So tell me now just what are you going to do?

How do you think, how do you think it feels?
How do you think it feels?
That I could travel round the world and fight
or just stay with him and I'll be all right.
So tell me, how do you think it feels?

Useful websites and sources of further information

Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month (June) official website
www.grthm.co.uk

Travellers' Times magazine for Gypsies & Travellers & those who
work with them, sharing information, contacts, news & views
www.travellerstimes.org.uk

Holocaust Memorial Day Trust – information about Roma Holocaust
including case study of Roma survivors
www.hmd.org.uk

National Geographic feature on European Gypsies including
multimedia presentation:
[http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0104/feature4/
index.html](http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0104/feature4/index.html)

Equality & Human Rights Commission research papers &
publication available as a PDF download – *Gypsies and Travellers:
simple solutions for living together*
[http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/
gypsies_and_travellers.pdf](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/gypsies_and_travellers.pdf)

*Gypsies and Travellers: Frequently asked questions, Myths ...and
the facts* – available as a PDF download from Bristol Council
[http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/Environment-Planning/
Parks-and-open-spaces/gypsies-and-travellers/gypsies-and-
travellers-myth-buster.en](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/ccm/content/Environment-Planning/Parks-and-open-spaces/gypsies-and-travellers/gypsies-and-travellers-myth-buster.en)

Roxy Freeman never went to school. Here she describes how at 22,
she decided to get a formal education, forcing her to face up to the
prejudices that blight her Gypsy community – and to shackle her
wandering spirit
[http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2009/sep/07/gypsy-
childhood-prejudice-education](http://www.guardian.co.uk/lifeandstyle/2009/sep/07/gypsy-childhood-prejudice-education)