



AN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT BY

STONECRABS THEATRE COMPANY

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# FOREWORD

History is all around us, in our communities, in the living memories and the experiences of older people, if you stop to talk to them you will hear many interesting stories. Oral history tries to capture the stories of ordinary people talking about everyday events which help to fill the gaps that historical documents don't cover.

It is also very important to ensure that different stories, from different communities are recorded. Some communities are less visible than others, and lack of visibility can lead to ignorance of the contribution those communities are giving to our society, and ignorance in turn may lead to prejudice and misunderstanding. The Brasilance Oral History project stemmed from the need to give more visibility to the small but growing minority of Brazilians in the UK, to record their stories and uncover the part they have played and are playing in the wider social context.

The Brasilance team recorded eleven stories of Brazilians living in London, some of them arrived here in the 60s. Their stories have been recorded and archived, and some of them form part of this book and the dvd which accompanies it, there has also been a public photographic exhibition and a series of events that accompanied the project. All of these will now become part of history.

I hope this book will provide you with a source of working material that encourages young people to discover more about Heritage and Oral History and the themes that revolve around it. I hope it will also inspire you to discover more about the Brazilians and other communities in London and maybe even organize your own Oral History project.

FRANKO FIGUEIREDO  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR STONECRABS THEATRE







# INTRODUCTION

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*This book is the final result of the education strand of the Brasilance Oral History Project. In the classroom, our education team creatively explored themes of identity and heritage drawn from interviews of Brazilians who arrived in London between the 60's and 80's. In the next pages, you will find the creative outcome of our work in schools; the material used in our workshops as well as fun tips to conduct your own heritage project.*



In the DVD that accompanies this book, you will find segments of five of the eleven oral history interviews originally collected by the Brasilance Oral History Project. You will be able to navigate through sections of interviews, meet the real-life characters that we portray in this book and hear their dreams, struggles and all the bits that make us all too human.

The DVD was created not only to complement the book, but as a powerful resource for

teachers, workshop leaders and facilitators in general, for use in and out of the classroom, finding their way into discussing polemic issues, initiating debates and instigating strong, meaningful response from participants.

Besides the interviews, there is also a section on the DVD which further explains how to carry out your own oral history interviews. We invite you to explore the DVD alongside reading this book!

# The MAKING Of...

Throughout 2014, our Brasilance Education team facilitated workshops in four secondary schools in London. Each school received a two-hour session based on the Oral History interviews with four Brazilians; these interviews would become the core of further creative work.



In preparation for the workshop, we deconstructed the interviewees' original stories with a series of clues to be used in theatre games for students to guess the identity of the real person behind them.

Imagination

The main objective of the workshop was to make a link between reality and imagination, and as such, to serve as a catapult for the development of truly inspiring, meaningful writing and drawing.



We therefore used four of our interviewees as a strong foundation for the development of fictional characters. Rosa, Francisco, Silvia and Celso (the real people) were turned, respectively, into: Rosalita, Franchesco, Demetria and Silas.



This book displays the exact stimuli we offered the students during the workshops, with an outline of the workshop itself (see page 52), as well as some of the outstanding writings and drawings created as a result of it. Each chapter represents one of four fictional characters and, at the end of them, you will be able to find a small summary on the real people behind the stories. We hope you enjoy this book as much as we enjoyed making it!

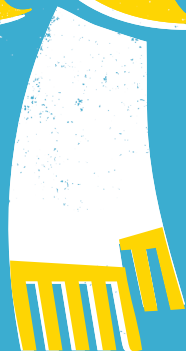
Create

01

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THE IMAGINARY

ROSALITA





# ROSALITA'S

## LIFE-CHANGING EVENT:

Rosalita, who came from a very humble background in the countryside of Brazil, was invited to work as a nanny in London in the 70s. When boarding the plane, Rosalita noticed she was the only black person travelling abroad. People looked at her as if asking 'what is this woman doing here?'

When arriving in London, Rosalita could not speak a word of English. Time went by, and Rosalita began to understand the language and the situation she was in. She was a live-in nanny working day and night, receiving little money in exchange.

One day, in one of her rare moments of rest, Rosalita was asked when chatting to people she had just met in a café: 'Is there racism in Brazil?' She immediately replied with conviction: 'No, there is no racism in Brazil. We are all equals in my country, there is no such thing as racism.' One man laughed and asked: 'Ok. Have you ever had a black president in your country?' Rosalita stayed in silence. Are there any black teachers teaching in your schools? Any black doctors working in your hospitals? Any black politicians in your government? Black business owners in your town?' Naively, Rosalita had replied 'NO' to all of those questions and silence was the only thing she could hear for a few seconds. Suddenly the man looked at the others around and said sarcastically: 'And she says that there is no racism in Brazil!'

**Rosalita reflected for a moment and realised that this unexpected encounter in a café would change her forever.**

### Identity Box

- 1 Ask each participant to create a box with clues that would represent themselves. The box can contain all kinds of personal, objects, books, magazines, CD/DVD covers, quotes, fabrics, types of food, etc.
- 2 Then ask participants to share the content of these boxes with each other.

It is a nice way for them to introduce themselves and to get to know each other. Feel like playing a guessing or matching game? The possibilities are endless!



The following clues were used to create Rosalita. By looking at these clues, can you trace a profile of her?



#### Check that you understand:

- Some of the historical reasons for immigration to the UK since 1945
- The main immigrant groups coming to the UK since 1945, the countries they came from and kind of work they did
- 1948-1951: Caribbean, French (Indochina) post-war migration, day with Postcard
- 1940-1950: Jewish people fleeing from persecution in Europe, Jewish people fleeing from persecution in Europe
- 1948-1951: Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, African, Caribbean, Chinese, etc.
- 1948-1951: Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, African, Caribbean, Chinese, etc.

A great leader's courage to fulfil his vision comes from passion, not position.  
**JOHN MAXWELL**

Good people do not need laws to tell them to act responsibly, while bad people will find a way around the laws.  
**PLATO**

### Teachers

EXPLORE THE ABOVE CLUES WITH YOUR GROUP FOLLOWING OUR WORKSHOP OUTLINE PAGE 53





Illustration by Farzana Yasmin



# GRANDMOTHER

by Farzana Yasmin Year 9

.....

**C**onfused. Confused was one of the words to describe the feelings that raced around my head. Excitement was bursting out my ears, through my nose and engulfed in my taste buds, that spread rapidly to my fingertips. The tingling sensation of achievement, achievement of my goal, to finally be able to lead a new life. It was not exactly as I had planned it to be but it worked out for the best. Life for me was not easy. My father had abandoned me and my mum when I was just 6 months. In July 1957, my one true love in life seeped through the wrenching pain of my soul, I could not sleep, the scrapes of my skin peeled as the blood drew in my deep thoughts of depression. Three years had passed and I was coming of age, I had finally decided to lead a new life and start afresh.

My mother had always taught me to work hard and you would get your reward. For all my life I had been living in the ghettos, in poverty and there was no way out; days would pass and many mothers were losing their children due to bad health, insufficient clean water. Vulnerable girls were abused by men and made into young mothers. Drugs such as heroin, marijuana, ecstasy and cocaine were taken; people ran riot reeking havoc across this desolate slum. It seemed normal. Normal was what this was for us ghetto people.

Near the end of February 1960 an opportunity had arisen from the distant lands, it felt like no other day I had ever experienced, though it did come at a cost. I had met two foreign couples; all I remember was clenching their ankles to the bone, pleading to them with my heart and soul, until the very brink of them exploding, they had finally agreed to take me as their new child minder. I boarded flight 243 to London only two weeks after meeting the couple: Mr and Mrs Charles Branson, who also had a son called Richard Charles Branson. It had only been three weeks since I had left home, and now I spent my time cleaning and doing chores for the



family. On a Monday morning, March 3rd, 1960, I had my first baby. I was hoping it would be a boy as this would be more favourable. I was blessed with a daughter which worked out better for me in later life. I had no idea who the father was, so I named her Marianne Louise Susan Lisa.

As time passed on I started to learn ways of understanding and reading, one of my favourite writers was Maya Angelou. Her book Published in 1970, 'I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings' shows her sense of understanding and her courageous speeches overwhelmed me and made me feel normal for once in my life. For a split second I was no longer the black illiterate woman who was a slave to the people. I was an educated woman who saw the world as an opportunity to make a difference in people's eyes like, Maya Angelou. With that I curled my fingers into a tight fist encouraging myself that I could make a difference. I stroked the dangling silver pendent with engraved intricate designs, that wrapped around my bare neck which my mother had passed on to me. With that I smiled gaily knowing that I would hopefully make a better life for myself and my family. It was the summer breeze that swept my scarf to the side of my plumped round cheeks, Marianne Lisa was at Mr and Mrs Charles Branson's house being looked after by my fellow colleagues, who secretly let me have some time to myself, Mr and Mrs Charles Branson were out with their son, and would not be back till evening. I sat on this rusty old bench reflecting to myself and what I was doing with my life. I had no money to go anywhere so my only choice was to watch the birds swooping in the effortless sky. *Suddenly glares were encountered and venomous pains inflicted on my already hurting wounds. Blood was rushing to my head. Nowhere to go, was this how the world was, superiority over equality? Gender over achievement? Race over being ME? The walls were closing in. No air was to get in. Sirens screeching in my ear creating a tsunami out of thin air,*

## NO NO NO. STOP

I found myself lying beside the rusty old bench, aching bones screaming in agony with cuts and bruises, there were broken shards from a glass bottle, the nearby street lamps illuminated the blood prints. My vision was bad but I decided to arise from the ashes beneath, in the distance drunken men, one in particular had a silhouette of a broken bottle. My mind was racing; I pinched my scalp to reassure myself and I began to set out down the streets, finally I saw my daughter Marianna Lisa standing out in the cold with a small bag that contained our belongings. A housemaid came out to throw away the waste and informed me that we have been kicked out. My heart sank; my cuts and

bruises were no longer the pain, I could not bear it any longer, the burden had become too big for me to carry. I collapsed to my knees, the impact of the heart rendering thought that, my daughter and I were stranded in a peculiar and strange place. I unwrapped my silver pendent and gave it to my daughter. "We may encounter many defeats but we must not be defeated" Maya Angelou, I whispered in my daughter's ears, that was the last of my words.

## Mum! Mum! Mum! What Happened Next! What Happened To Grandma!

I said. "I don't know, she didn't write it in her journal". "But you were there weren't you?" my mum replied with a quiver in her voice. I then realised that grandmother took her own life, giving her daughter the best possible chance. She did not finish her journal because she was not bothered to continue, it was because she had nothing of her life to tell.

At that moment my mother stroked the silver pendent. I grabbed her trembling hands and squeezed it tight, she was never going to leave me. I wouldn't let her. Tears escaped from her soulless eyes; the luminous liquid rolled down her cheeks and into the palm of my hand. I gazed at the angelic tear, it reflected something, but that something was not me. It seemed to be my grandmother smiling at me with merriment, It felt so real.

## It filled me with sorrow that I never got to meet her, her name was Rosalita and she was my grandmother



# THE REAL ROSA

Rosa arrived in London in 1978, hired as a full-time nanny to work for a wealthy Brazilian family. She was only 19 years old back then and, coming from the countryside of Brazil, she knew very little about the world.

Arriving in London was a big shock to Rosa: the weather, the culture, the language, the people, everything felt as if she was arriving on a different planet. It took Rosa a while to adapt to her new life, as she went through very difficult moments and situations along the way.

The event in the cafe (described in the beginning of this chapter) changed her forever. She says in her interview that she went back home that evening feeling embarrassed, ashamed and naïve for not realising before that racism existed in her country. She felt cheated and brainwashed, which pushed her to become more critical and aware of herself.

After Rosa left her nanny job, she made lots of friends, learned to speak English and decided to stay in London for good. She then got married and had two children. She has lived in Greenwich ever since, where she became a community leader.

Here is the real story of an incredibly strong person, admirable citizen and devoted mother. Rosa is about to launch her own business: the Guerrilla Café.



## Did you know?

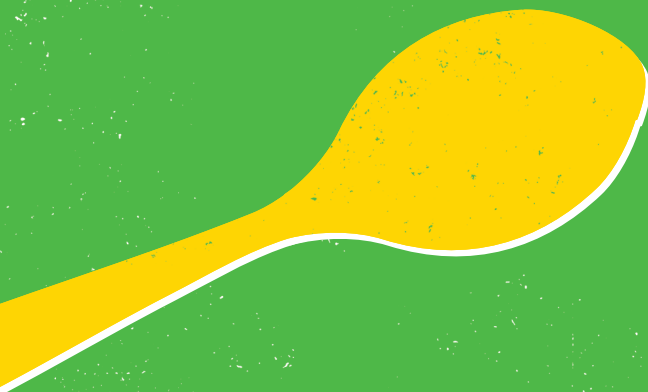
According to genetics, there is more variety within similar ethnic groups than there is between people from different ethnic groups. For example, two random Italians are as likely to be as genetically different as an Italian and a Chinese!

**i** TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ROSA GO TO THE DVD

02

THE IMAGINARY

# FRANCHESCO





# FRANCESCO'S

## LIFE-CHANGING EVENT:

Francesco traveled through Spain, Portugal and Italy. During the course of his trip he worked in various restaurants, helping chefs in the preparation of different dishes. He wasn't a very good cook at first but after gaining so much experience, Francesco finally stepped up and got a job as a chef.

In Italy, a well-known catering company hired him. This company was responsible for many of the important private parties in Rome. On one occasion, a special guest from a party loved Francesco's food and asked to meet the chef. In a brief and friendly conversation, Francesco was taken by surprise: the man who wanted to meet him was, in fact, an Ambassador. Francesco's outgoing spirit and joyful personality captivated the Ambassador, who immediately offered him a job:

## TO COOK FOR THE BRAZILIAN EMBASSY IN LONDON!

### HERITAGE

- 1 Invite participants to play the detective and to collect 'life-changing events' from family members.
- 2 Engage participants to analyse the events and to check which ones have impacted their own lives and how.



The following clues were used to create Francesco. By looking at these clues, can you trace a profile of him?

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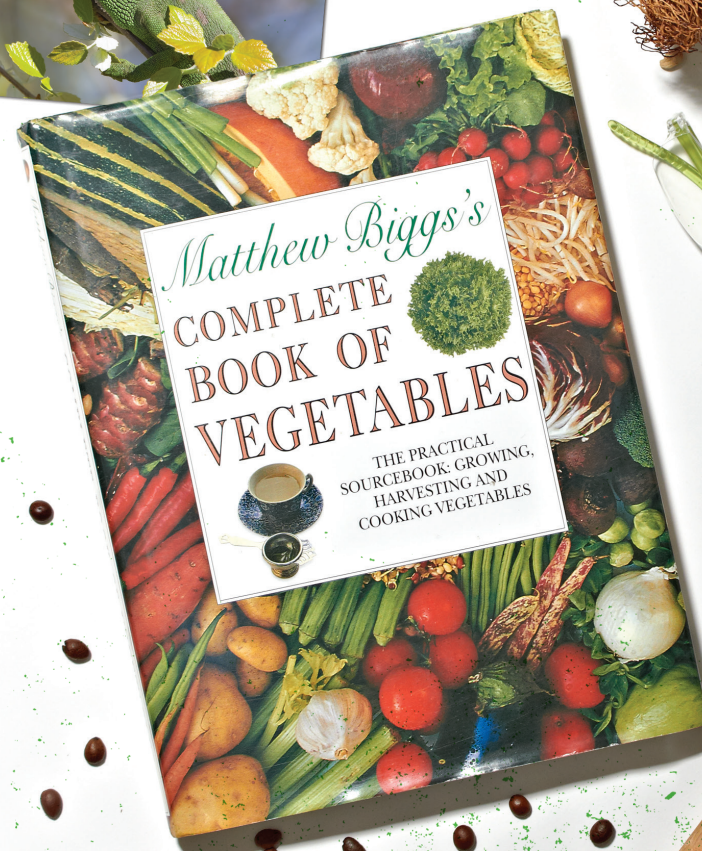
I have become my own version of an optimist. If I can't make it through one door, I'll go through another door - or I'll make a door. Something terrific will come no matter how dark the present.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

“

One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well.

VIRGINIA WOOLF



### TEACHERS

EXPLORE THE ABOVE CLUES WITH YOUR GROUP FOLLOWING OUR WORKSHOP OUTLINE PAGE 53





ILLUSTRATION BY ADELA BEGUM

# FRANCESCO GILZO

by Adela Begum Year 9

.....

I didn't know that taking one little adventure would turn my world upside down in such a wonderful way. But this did. And oh, I am so glad that I took the opportunity of finding out.

When I was 12 I had such a passion for cooking, some of the students in my class used to call me names such as 'girly pants' or 'Franchesco Girlzo' (making fun of my name Francesco Gilzo). You see, in that time, most people believed that the South American expectations for boys were to play sports or perform the manly jobs (whatever that is), so telling people that you liked cooking was like telling them that they would live forever, something unbelievable right? But that was most people, not all. Growing up was difficult but my mother made it quite enjoyable. My mother didn't believe in the stereotypes for boys, she wanted what was best for her kids. Everyday when I came back from an exhausting day of school I helped my mum make Italian Sausage Stew and Anticuchos (Peruvian beef kebabs).

## THESE WERE MY FAVOURITE DISHES AND I LEARNED HOW TO COOK THEM PRETTY QUICKLY.

Anyway let me race ahead to what happened. One day when I was 17 the chef of a famous restaurants in Chile came to visit our school, for something that I do not quite remember. I was extremely excited but a lot of the kids in school were sniggering while chef Alonso cooked a fascinating dish and they thought that it was a waste of time, which made me rather disappointed. When he cooked I was inspired (and so



were a few others from the looks of it), the way he cooked dishes rapidly and with no hesitation, that was exactly what I wanted to do when I grew up. When he finished and added the final touches to the food he looked around the hall. Everyone was curious as to why he was doing this. Then he finally stopped and asked who'd like to taste his dish. No one moved an inch and I found myself raising my hand. After a few seconds he told me to stand up, everyone turned their gaze to me and I felt unbelievably self-conscious. I felt extremely nervous, I never really put my hands up for anything, I'm not one of those confident kids. As I stood there someone in the back of the hall snorted 'Him? What can he do?'. I turned around to witness who said that and suddenly I felt very low. It was a boy a couple of years older than me, his name was Jacob. I despised him and he did of me. Chef Alonso stared at him and replied 'Well he was the only one who raised his hand, so I definitely know he's braver than you'. The boy looked like he was thinking of a witty reply but quietened down when he saw the stern look our head teacher Mr Drimenia gave him. Alonso beckoned his fingers for me to join him, I travelled towards him. Then he kindly told me to taste his dish. I took the spoon from his hand and tasted the slightly pink and very attractive looking dish. It was amazing.

## I WAS ON CLOUD NINE WHILE RUNNING ON A RAINBOW. I WANTED TO JUMP FROM ONE PLANET TO ANOTHER.

It was by far the best dish I'd ever tasted. I think everyone in the hall knew what I was experiencing because they were all looking ravenous afterwards. I turned to Chef Alonso and stated 'that was delicious, one of the best meals I have ever tasted'. He smirked and thanked me. I returned to my seat with a wide grin. When he requested if anyone else would like to try his creation, practically every person in the hall raised their hand, even the teachers! He smiled and chose some lucky ones to come up for some tasting.

After the assembly had ended, Mr Drimenia asked me to stay behind. Again glances were given towards me, at that moment I felt like some popular person. While students left the hall I walked to our head teacher and Chef Alonso. Mr Drimenia told me that the chef was looking for young talents that were eager to work in the food industry and he thought I might be up for it. My eyes widened while he continued explaining about the process and the lot, but I lost focus. I started imagining my life as a chef, my dream. It made my heart beat

ten times faster. Chef Alonso placed his hand on my shoulder and asked if I was interested and I replied (quite loudly might I add) with a YES! Mr Drimenia then said 'Great we'll meet with you tonight at your house'. Which was normal as Mr Drimenia was a close friend of my father, he used to visit before my father tragically died. They both shook my hand and I was dismissed for class.

When I returned home I told my mum about the news and she was ecstatic as I thought she would be. My five-year-old sister, Natalia, was there and she was jumping with joy. My mum's eyes started tearing up and when I asked her why she replied

“YOUR FATHER WOULD'VE BEEN SO PROUD”

All three of us smiled sadly but it was interrupted with a knock. I went to open the door and saw Mr Drimenia and Chef Alonso waiting eagerly to come inside. Before I even closed the door Chef Alonso informed us that he'd forgotten to tell me the trip was to Spain and I'd be gone for a few years with some time off for holidays. In an instant the whole room turned silent, just the flutter of the curtains was heard. Chef and I regarded one another, and then I turned to look at my mum and my little sister. I couldn't leave them alone, my dad had only died a few months ago and we were still getting over it. It was such a sudden death from a heart attack. But, a few minutes later, to my surprise my mum nodded and said 'That's fine, he'll go, but is it safe?', Chef assured her that it was. I opened my mouth to argue back but my mum just shook her head. Despite knowing my mother was a strong woman I didn't give up. I told my mother that she shouldn't be left alone to deal with Natalia. But the kind and solid stare on my mother's face told me she'd decline my argument. It was hard to debate with her when she had made her mind up. Her family always came first.

## SO A FEW MONTHS LATER I WAS IN SPAIN LEARNING HOW TO COOK

I was making all sorts of dishes, I was sending letters to my family and they sent some back, it was going great. I had made some friends and even got hold of renting a small but attractive apartment with my fellow companions. But I was slightly aware that something had occurred. Two years later Chef Alonso was promoted into an even higher position (I mean how high could someone get?) and he left wishing all of us interns

(well we weren't that new there) the best of luck. His replacement was a young man in his early 20's. I hadn't recognised him at first but then I realised that it was him. Jacob.

## YES THAT JACOB. I WAS SHOCKED.

I hadn't known that he would come into the food industry. If there was a cloud zero I would've been standing on it right then. As you might have guessed he wasn't at all pleased to see me there either. I won't forget the look on his face, it was between a look of embarrassment and anger. On that day he ordered us to make a dish of our own and predictably he didn't like my cooking, he actually fired me after a few days. No one argued with the decision, not even my closest friends that I'd made over the past two years. Well I couldn't blame them, to be honest I probably wouldn't either, I wouldn't want to be fired because by now we were getting paid a good amount for cooking.

So as the months went by I interviewed for other jobs and I was allowed to work there. But the food I was producing was good but just not great. These were the top restaurants I was working for back then, they needed five star cuisine not four. So guess what? They fired me. I was in a new low and didn't know how to escape from it. The only good thing was that my mother thought I was still working for Chef Alonso and I let her believe that. I didn't need her to worry. As months - which seemed like years - swiftly passed I had an idea. Oh was I thrilled when I thought of it.

## I DECIDED TO PRODUCE SOME FOOD OF MY OWN AND SELL IT TO A STALL.

It was a simple idea but one that would help me to get a good amount of money again and help me get back on my feet. I purchased product after product, tried and tested recipes, then finally created a great dish. I travelled to some stalls and started selling my products. Luckily the stallholders liked it - wait no- they absolutely loved it! I was surprised, very surprised. I didn't believe it was that good. Word got out and top chefs heard about my invention. I was asked to cook for the prime minister of Spain (I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW THEY HAD ONE) and my dish was sold in magazines, newspapers and even chef books. Soon after, with the help of others, I opened my own restaurant, just like I always had wanted to. From then on I became *'one of today's most loved chefs'* a quote from my chef book. Many people applied to get a job and the more qualified ones were chosen. Even Jacob tried to obtain a job because he knew it was

good pay, but after all his hatred towards me I rejected him. I know it was mean but well what can I say? Karma finally came around.

I'm 31 now, I've married and have two beautiful children. My mother unfortunately died a few years back but I will always remember what she did for me and the strength she had. My kid sister's life is *'fabulous and ready for adventure'* as she always says when I call her. Well that is my story and I will leave you with this quote that I know is full of truth:





# THE REAL FRANCISCO

Francisco arrived in London thirty-two years ago, after spending some time working as a kitchen auxiliary in Portugal, Italy and the United States. On his arrival, Francisco noticed there weren't many Brazilian restaurants in the city and came up with the idea of creating a service of food delivery called 'the quentinha project'. He soon became his own boss and opened his own catering business: Francisco's Kitchen. Life was beautiful so Francisco decided to stay in London for good and become a British citizen. With cooking, Francisco found his passion, could express the love for his family and the longing for his home country, an ever present feeling despite the distance. As Francisco says himself "I never stopped being a Brazilian in London."

“  
TO ADAPT TO LONDON ONE JUST  
NEEDS TO ENJOY THE WEATHER,  
THE LANGUAGE... AFTER THESE TWO,  
EVERYTHING ELSE BECOMES EASY.”



## DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that if you hold your nose, food doesn't taste the same? Try covering your eyes and holding your nose. Can you tell the difference between apples, potatoes and onions?

**i** TO LEARN MORE ABOUT FRANCISCO GO TO THE DVD

03

THE IMAGINARY

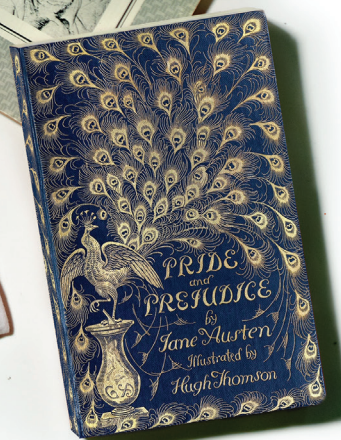
# Demetria







The following clues were used to create Demetria. By looking at these clues, can you trace a profile of her?



“

Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will.  
MAHATMA GANDHI

“

A dreamer is one who can only find his way by moonlight, and his punishment is that he sees the dawn before the rest of the world.  
OSCAR WILDE

”

# Demetria's

## LIFE-CHANGING EVENT:

During her teenage years, Demetria fell in love with Capoeira: a Brazilian martial art of African origin that combines music, dance and fight.

Back in the 80s, Capoeira was certainly not considered a reputable sport, nor an activity for women. Demetria's parents were obviously not happy with her hobby and did not approve of the friends she made through her practice. They expected Demetria to go to University and follow a normal and successful career.

Demetria understood her parent's worries, as it really seemed impossible to live off capoeira in Brazil. She felt torn: she couldn't follow the career she loved, and, at the same time, the thought of giving it up for another one, was too hard to bear. There seemed to be no choice for her but to leave her native Brazil.

Stepping into the unknown, not speaking any other language than Portuguese, she arrived in London. As she left Heathrow Airport a slight fear hit her:

**What is going to happen now?**

### Oral History Interviews

Go to the Oral History Guide featured in the DVD that accompanies this book. Check it out and set your own series of Oral History interviews. You'll see there is more history around you than you imagine!



### Teachers

EXPLORE THE ABOVE CLUES WITH YOUR GROUP FOLLOWING OUR WORKSHOP OUTLINE PAGE 52





Illustration by Zaynab Kais

# Demetria's life

by Zaynab Kais year 9

**Inequality. Strength. The fight for justice.**  
**My name is Demetria de la Costa, and this is my story.**

Before, it was quite unusual for a fifteen year old girl to be interested in martial arts. That was when it all started; thanks to Capoeira, I could finally be myself without the pressure of friends and family. I felt that this was one thing I was really good at, considering my grades at school... Being involved in Capoeira; it was my dream career!

My parents disagreed.

"Little ladies like you don't do martial arts, Demetria... they sit at home and BEHAVE." My dad had said when I mentioned it. I was disappointed that my parents didn't really support what I wanted to do in the future; my mother just told me to do what my father thinks is right. Was it wrong for me to figure out my own career path? I didn't think so at all. My friend Rose just wanted me to do the same thing as her: be a carer for the elderly. I didn't want to hurt her feelings or anything, but friends can't always do EVERYTHING together. I felt so strongly about this capoeira career I was prepared to sacrifice everything for it. And by that I meant EVERYTHING.

By the time I finished my exams (my grades came out great, surprisingly, but it still didn't put a dent in my dream) and graduated high school, I was two weeks away from turning seventeen. Rose was pretty happy with her grades, and wanted to start caring in an old people's home straight away. I came out and told her the truth, that what I really wanted to do was empower women and show that we can do martial arts; we are just as equal as men! I was really surprised when Rose turned her back on me and said that my dream would never happen anyway. I was so determined to show her, and my parents, that I could do it by myself. And I could do it just fine.

I ran away to London. £186 of savings was enough to get me there, apparently. It was a third class ticket, including a twenty-seven hour boring, bumpy and nauseous flight, but I was glad to get there (sort of) safe. As soon as I came out of Heathrow Airport, lugging my bulging suitcase behind me, I



wondered if my parents knew I left at two o'clock in the morning to fly across the world to prove a point. I wondered if they would even care... since they had been making me feel quite unconfident lately. Parents care about our future, but I felt that my parents were making me do what they wanted to do when they were my age.

I wandered around the entrance, looking for transport to the nearest hotel. I only had £21 left and I didn't really think it would get me anywhere. A black cab screeched to a halt near my suitcase. "Owight? Gayin somewhere?" The driver's thick accent caused me to stutter. I wasn't very good at understanding English, so I was stuck. "Urm... H-h-hot-tel?" I flustered. The driver nodded and gestured to get into the back seat. The cab spluttered and set off. I sighed and tried to relax. My heart was beating very fast. How could I do this? To prove I was independent I went off to London. A very stupid idea indeed! It was about fifteen minutes later that the cab stopped. "That's nineteen pounds, darlin'!" The driver stretched out his hand. NINETEEN POUNDS. NINETEEN POUNDS! 1-9 POUNDS. That left me with two pounds to survive. I couldn't believe it. "Here...." I muttered and stuffed the notes into his sweaty palm. I opened the door and struggled out.

I straightened up and saw a neon sign saying 'Cosy Cottage-Vacancies available'. But what was the point now? I only had two pounds. It was getting windy, so I went inside anyway. The interior was very... vintage. A ragged old chair was set in the middle of the room; it didn't look very welcoming. An old woman who seemed to be the receptionist was reading a Vogue magazine.

I cleared my throat and she scarcely looked up. "May I help you?" She frowned.

"I'm looking for a room for one night?" I asked.

"One night starting from two hundred and fifty pounds," she smirked. It's like she knew I couldn't afford it. I sighed and started to pick everything up. Spending a night in the streets of London; looks like Rose was right. I couldn't even achieve my dream if I tried.

The receptionist suddenly tapped her bell frantically. "Excuse me miss, pardon me! You wouldn't happen to be good at martial arts or dancing or painting, ya think?"

I gasped and turned around. "I-I think I'm ok at martial arts, why?" "Well, across the road is a new youth centre, and they're looking for some teachers, so... you can apply in the morning if ya like!" She smiled. I think she felt sorry for me or something, but I was glad she mentioned this. Was this it? Was this the start of my dream?

"That's great, I will! But I have nowhere to stay for the night... so--"

"Don't tell my manager, but you can stay for one night, on the house!" she

interrupted. Who knew this woman was about to change my life forever?

Long story short, at the crack of dawn I got up and noted things I might need in case I was interviewed on the spot for this job. It was one step closer to my capoeira dream. I thought they'd find it interesting to have someone who had done Capoeira before. And they did. They asked a few questions and shook my hand, announcing that I had officially got the job as a teacher of martial arts to all ages. I was overwhelmed with all of the emotions. How had I gotten here? Just how? My parents had called worried sick until I told them what had happened over twenty-four hours. They sighed and judged me but I knew that I was doing the right thing for myself. I just knew.

Within three weeks, I had settled down into an apartment for rent not too far from the youth centre I was teaching at. I cherished every moment of my job.

It was one day when my manager, Maddy, introduced me to a woman with a friendly face, wearing a medal around her neck and a white tracksuit. "Jade Jones," the woman grinned.

"Pleasure to meet you, urm... Jade!" I spluttered. I didn't know who she was but I was still nervous.

I continued teaching my class full of teenagers, having great fun along the way. After I dismissed the class, I picked up my bag and was heading for the door when Jade Jones stopped me.

"Err... Hi! I don't think you're familiar with me, but I was the Olympics 2012 winner of Taekwondo and I'm about to ask you a favour: you're really good at martial arts yourself, and I was hoping you could train me a bit more for the Olympics happening soon in Brazil? You could be in it too!"

I thought I was going to collapse. She giggled, as I couldn't find any words to express myself.

"I-I'd love to! I'm from Brazil, so... I can't even breathe, this is such an amazing opportunity, thank you so much!!" I managed to choke out. I staggered out of the room to call my parents and tell them that I was coming back to Brazil to train Olympic champion Jade Jones and be in it myself; they couldn't believe it either! Everyone was so happy, including Rose, who apologised for underestimating me. I forgave her, since we were best friends, after all. At seventeen, this was happening too fast, but I wouldn't ever regret this dream life I was living so far.

I'm older now, and I'm still training with Jade (who is my new best friend) for the Olympics, which will be happening in two weeks! When I'm not doing some full on training, I'm running my own Capoeira club in my hometown for girls who are like me, aspiration in their eyes, and I know that, like me, they'll never give up until they are living their dream.

# THE REAL Silvia

Silvia was only nineteen when she arrived in London, all by herself. Leaving Brazil was a big life-making decision for Silvia and to make capoeira her main profession even more so. She had fallen for capoeira at the age of fifteen in her home city of Santos, where she was training to be a dancer. She realized capoeira really allowed her to be herself, however this martial art of afro origins was looked down on by the middle classes in Brazil at that time. So when Silvia decided to take capoeira as her main path, it caused quite a storm. Coming to London strengthened Silvia's decision and a few years after her arrival she founded, with her partner, the first capoeira school in the UK 'The London School of capoeira'. Life as a Brazilian capoeirista has not always been easy but the school just celebrated its 25th anniversary and saw Silvia become a capoeira master. What makes Silvia such a determined person? "To have drive and to be honest with what you want to do is key", she says.

**“The smell of the city was different then.”**



## Did you know?

Capoeira was created in times of slavery in Brazil? Slaves used capoeira's dance-like movements and music as a way to hide their self-defence training. Today it is a martial art taught by masters throughout the world.



**i** TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SILVIA GO TO THE DVD



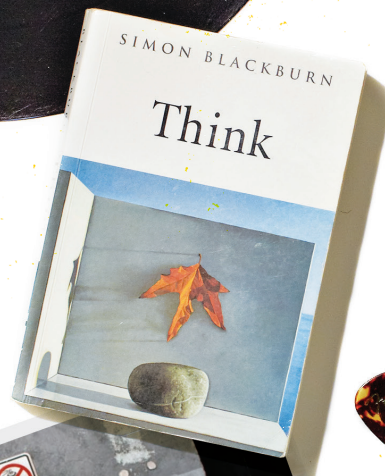
04

THE IMAGINARY





The following clues were used to create Silas. By looking at these clues, can you trace a profile of him?



Rules were made to be broken.



If you would be a real seeker after truth, it is necessary that at least once in your life you doubt, as far as possible, all things.

RENÉ DESCARTES



# SILAS'

## LIFE-CHANGING EVENT:

Silas lived in London for a while after his visa expired. He tried to extend it, but the authorities denied him the new visa. He decided to stay, regardless of his illegal situation.

He worked in a restaurant as a kitchen porter and he shared a flat with some friends. One day, he was home after work when someone knocked on the door. It was a friendly knock, the kind that has a rhythm to it. Silas opened the door. It was in fact an immigration officer, holding his badge, telling Silas that he was being arrested.



## EXHIBITION

Get all the bits and pieces you have created by following this book: objects, life-changing events, interviews, new writing and creative drawings. With these materials you and your group can put together an exhibition on Identity and Heritage.

## TEACHERS

EXPLORE THE ABOVE CLUES WITH YOUR GROUP FOLLOWING OUR WORKSHOP OUTLINE PAGE 52

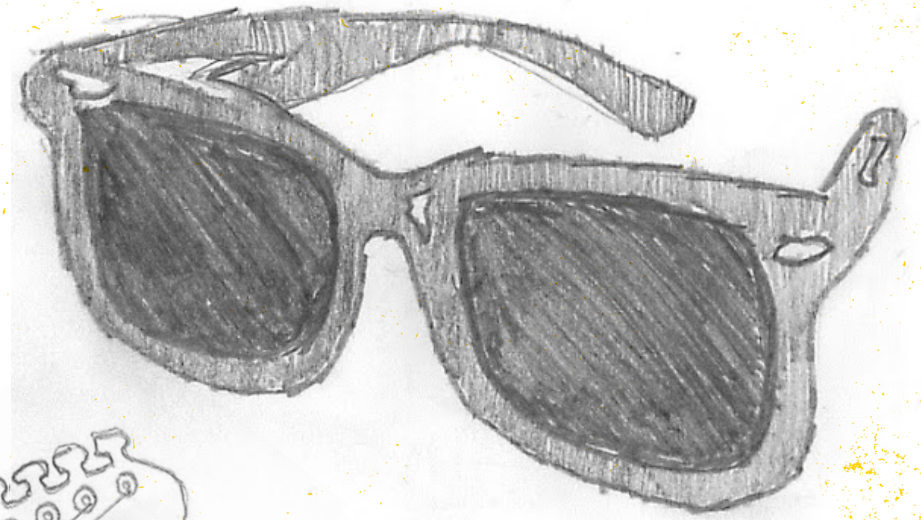


# POEMS ABOUT OVERCOMING DIFFICULTY

## *Poem by Ozge Parin, Year 8*

And again, that moment had  
Arrived; those inevitable  
moments I dreaded. I knew I couldn't do  
anything to stop them. Once again I  
felt invisible I couldn't hear myself  
think, let alone try to stop them

They quarrelled viciously and it seemed  
Like it was the hardest thing in  
The world to stop them.  
They growled and howled as I  
stood there trying to make the  
worst decision of my life – whose  
side was I on?



## *Poem by Zack Dourding, Year 8*

The leaves rustled in the trees that I faced,  
Forever I have stood here, waiting to fly,  
Waiting to see the other side of the trees.  
Before, I have jumped, only to plummet to the  
Level I am at now – I have no strength to fly.

The top is filled with fickle faces and cheap  
Smiles, looking down on the ones down here.  
Beyond the tree I hope to see past, but  
Dare not try, figures move – my friends.  
I call for them, to no avail. It is  
Not worth flying now, for what have I got to look for?  
Everything provided for me by  
The leader of the flock, food caught by the other  
And a place to shelter; I have everything, yet  
I have nothing.

The walls of this tree are crumbling no one else  
Can see it. Deadly  
The leaves rustled in the trees that I faced.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY A PERSON

# THE REAL CELSO

The passion for Rock music led Celso to learn basic English by listening to the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. For him, London was the centre of the world, everything happened first in London, then everywhere else.

After a short stay in Barcelona, Celso arrived at Victoria station in London with nothing but a rucksack. A Colombian friend of a friend helped him to find a place to stay in the house of an exiled Chilean in Streatham. While working in bars, restaurants and hotels he managed to buy his first computer and continued to write music. A few years later he was bringing famous Brazilian Rock bands to London and even had the opportunity to record one of his own songs at Abbey road studios!

"To be of Latin American origins and to be living in an Anglo-saxon country is a great feeling because you have the best from both worlds", says Celso. For him, one of the greatest things about Londoners is their tolerance, it's much more open than any city in Brazil regarding gender equality and ways of life. For example, no one will tell you that it is not possible to still be composing rock songs at 62 years old!



**THE BRAIN IS A GREY MATTER FULL OF NEURONS FLASHING WITH ELECTRIC PULSES HERE AND THERE CREATING SYNAPSES AND IN THE MIDDLE OF ALL THAT MESS, SOMETHING CALLED LOVE APPEARS.**



## DID YOU KNOW?

When you listen to music, your heartbeat changes and mimics the rhythm you are listening to?

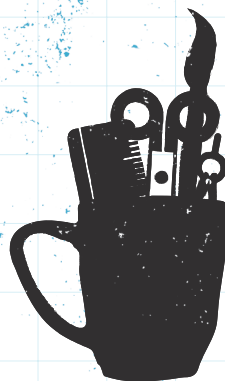


TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CELSO GO TO THE DVD



# THE WORKSHOP

## AND HOW TO USE THIS BOOK AS A LEARNING MATERIAL



*In this chapter you will find a step by step outline of the workshop we delivered in schools. The activities proposed in the workshop were tailored to link the Oral History side of our project to themes of Identity and Heritage. We want to offer facilitators of all kinds (workshop leaders, school teachers, community leaders) a flexible, fun and creative resource to work from. We hope you will be able to use this workshop outline as a guide for your own work. Here is an invitation to explore the material below and make it your own!*

### WORKSHOP OUTLINE

The workshop sessions were developed with the aim to make participants less self-aware and more in touch with their creative instincts. Through a variety of theatre games, we provided a safe platform for participants to understand and engage with the world of the characters they were meeting. This journey was necessary in order to facilitate the fusion between fictional character and participant, thus empowering the creative writing and drawing that would come after the workshop.

Drama is a powerful learning tool; it is the art form that is closest to real life. Through the body one can learn to trigger different layers of thoughts, emotions and understandings.

### WARM UP

It is important to start this workshop with a group warm up. A circle game can set a fun atmosphere for the work and help participants with their communication skills. Pick something that your group will enjoy. Keep it short and straight to the point: it is all about having fun and focus.

In our workshop, we used a name introduction game played in a circle followed by a call-and-response rhythmic exercise. Participants were then encouraged to move to music through the space and respond to sound cues. At the end of this exercise participants were asked to form groups. The warm-up should be about 10 to 15 minutes.

**Note:** Need help choosing a game? Search the internet for "circle games" you will find a great variety! Choose the one that most appeal to you and your group.

### SET UP

Look for dynamic ways to set up the steps below:

- 1 Divide participants into groups (4-6 people per group is ideal)
- 2 Hand one clipboard with the **Identity File Sheet** to each group (*you can find the Identity File Sheet template on page 59*). For each task of this workshop, the groups will be completing a box on that sheet.
- 3 In each group, one person should be responsible for writing down the ideas on the sheet. Ask the group to choose the person who has most of the following skills:
  - A **Good listening:** To listen to everyone in the group equally and note down ideas coming from all participants.
  - B **Concision:** To be able to write things down in a short and precise way (bullet point like)

### PART 1 – CHARACTER PROFILE

#### A) CLUES:

The groups will be investigating the profile of the characters displayed in this book. For each of them there is a determined set of clues, which you can find at the beginning of each chapter. Prior to the workshop, prepare an individual folder or box containing each character's clues. Provide each group with one of these folders or boxes.

After studying their given clues, each group will create a **character profile** to be written down on **BOX 1** of the *Identity File Sheet*.

You can help them by asking these questions:

**By looking at the clues below, what assumptions do you make about this person?**

**How is he/she physically, emotionally and intellectually?**

**What is his/her profession, likes and dislikes, qualities and flaws?**

#### B) PRESENTING THE CHARACTER:

Once the **character profile** is written down, groups will be challenged to introduce their characters to each other through *still images*.

One person will embody the character and freeze in a certain position (*the objects from the folder can help with characterization*).

The other members of the group will describe the profile they have created for the character, as if introducing this person to the rest of the class. For each part of the description, the group must back up their argument by showing the clue that led them to make that assumption.

## STILL IMAGE

A still image is a moment of absolute stillness in drama. In the context of this workshop, each participant will create a still image that represents their character by using only their bodies and objects directly connected to the characters.

After the sharing, objects and folders can be put aside.

## PART 2 – LIFE-CHANGING EVENT

The *life-changing event* is the description of an important event that each character went through at a certain point in their lives. They can be found after the clues in the section "THE IMAGINARY..." of each chapter.

### A) UNDERSTANDING THE EVENT

Photocopy and cut out the life-changing event, then attach it to **BOX 2** of the **Identity File Sheet**.

Ask groups to read the event together and try to make sense of what happened to their character and why.

**SUGGESTION:** Go around the groups and make sure they have understood the stories in depth. Some of the themes approached are sensitive, and you will probably want to avoid shallow simplifications or disrespectful behavior during the sharing.

### B) ACTING OUT THE EVENT

Acting out the story immediately would not create the best results. Instead, facilitate this task by breaking it down in different steps, so the participants get accustomed to the material.

- 1 Make sure groups fully understand the story and ask them to break down the *life-changing event* into three parts.
- 2 For each of the three parts ask them to create a *tableau*. The aim is to convey the whole event in a sequence of tableaux.
- 3 Once they have created the tableaux, the word **acting** can be mentioned. For each tableau give them a few

seconds to portray the event. They are free to speak and to act out whatever is necessary to convey the story.

- 4 Prepare a performance space, if possible with a tidy and clean background without any visual distractions, and define where the audience will be sitting.
- 5 Invite each group to share their performances. At the end of the performance, encourage them to give feedback to each other, by pointing out what worked well in each performance.

**NOTE:** Summarise the original story at the end of each performance if necessary.

## TABLEAU

In a tableau, participants make still images with their bodies to represent a scene. A tableau can be used to quickly establish a scene that involves a large number of characters. Because there is no movement, a tableau is easier to manage than a whole-group improvisation – yet it can easily lead into extended drama activities. It can be used to explore a particular moment in a story or drama, or to replicate a photograph or artwork for deeper analysis.

## PART 3: THE FUTURE

In a plenary, get all workshop participants together for a quick discussion. These questions are open to anyone to answer; the groups do not matter at this point.

Going through each character, raise a few relevant questions based on the ideas below:

**How deep did the event affect the character? Did she/he need to overcome any difficulty after the event? If so, explain how.**

**How did this event affect the future choices of the character?**

**Following the event, what could have happened to him/her?**

Make the discussion brief and watch extracts of the DVD to show participants the real people behind the fictional characters they created. It is an interesting exercise for the participants to watch the real characters after so much speculation. Facilitate the discussion by asking relevant questions like:

**Were the characters what you expected them to be?**

**In which ways are they similar or different from your initial expectations?**

## THE END OR THE BEGINNING?

It is up to you how to end the workshop. In our case, we wanted to set up the students for the *Creative Writing and Drawing Contest* that supported the development of this book (read more about it on page 58). If you'd like to do the same, and invite participants to begin a new creative journey, just continue reading.

→ WHAT IS NEXT FOR YOU? ←



## THE WRITING AND DRAWING

In this specific proposal, we asked students to choose one of the characters from the workshop to serve as a reference for their writing or drawing.

The act of choosing a character/story to explore is in itself influenced by someone's own experience. Students usually choose themes that are 'closer to home', either because they already know something about it, or because they want to discover new things from it. Choices are almost never random.

The students were given the freedom to create a 'persona' to represent the character they picked to write about.

They were challenged to think about this 'persona' as somebody connected to them: either a family member, a person of their community, or even themselves. By making this imaginary link, we immediately set up the students to write or draw something linked to their reality.

**Through this exercise each student's background, family values, fears and desires, detach from their intricate web of emotions to become simple pieces of a creative puzzle.**

The results speak for themselves. The stories and drawings that you found in this book were nothing more than the students' commitment to the proposal.

**“Imagination is the beginning of creation. You imagine what you desire, you will what you imagine, and at last, you create what you will.”**  
George Bernard Shaw

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Identity and Heritage are important and delicate topics to be discussed, especially when it comes to young people. As a subjective territory, and hard to touch upon, many teachers/facilitators purposefully neglect it in order to avoid difficult situations.

By using our fictional characters as a starting point, we aimed to initiate this reflection. Through these fictional narratives it becomes easier to identify points, make links between events and reflect upon consequences in the characters' lives.

It is also a safe path to make assumptions and to dismiss them if they are incorrect. The DVD can also take the work into a more discursive level, by setting group discussions on topics raised by the interviewees.

It is necessary to provide young people with a safe place to explore their own personal stories, and help them understand who they are and where they come from. With the right support and guidance, youngsters can develop self-awareness, self-acceptance and self-realisation.

**“Never be bullied into silence. Never allow yourself to be made a victim. Accept no one's definition of your life, but define yourself.”**  
Harvey Fierstein

## TO KNOW MORE ABOUT BRASILIANCE

**Brasiliance was an oral history project launched by StoneCrabs Theatre Company and supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, focusing on Brazilians living in London since the 60s, 70s and 80s.**

The aim of the project was to offer a different look onto a growing London community, exploring their contribution to shaping the social, cultural and religious identities of London today.

The project started in June 2013 with the forming of a strong volunteer forum group composed of Brazilian Londoners and other Brazilian aficionados. Through monthly meetings, the group researched, engaged with Brazilian culture, trained in Oral History, identified potential interviewees and participated in essential discussions to help shape the project.

By December 2013, we had identified the 11 interviewees. Thanks to a professional oral history training led by The Oral History Society, we were ready to interview. The 11 interviewees, originating from a variety of backgrounds and professions were Cristina Eastwood, Maria Cunha, Rosa Gonçalves, Dedé Paixão, Ricardo Dos Santos, Celso Barbieri, Silvia Bazzarelli, Ana Elizabeth Fiuza, Graça Fish, Marcio Amaral and Francisco Torres

Full interviews are archived in libraries throughout London, including the Institute of Latin American Studies. Short extracts of all interviews can be found on the Brasiliance website.

**These interviews were the stimuli to produce a range of creative output:**

A limited edition of this book, accompanied by its DVD, distributed as learning materials to many London secondary schools and libraries in London. Please contact us if you wish to receive a copy.

Creative workshops have been delivered to over 200 London school children and community members.

A Brasiliance Day was organised at Deptford Lounge on Saturday 7 June 2014, celebrating the heritage of Brazilians. The day offered tales for children and a visual arts exhibition.

A Brasiliance Weekend has been organised at Richmix in Shoreditch, London on Saturday 5 and Sunday 6 July 2014. This event took place during the Brazilian World Cup. It offered readings, a scratch production of a new play (detailed below), screening of the interviews and a unique Brasiliance exhibition presenting photographs of the interviewees and the making of the project.

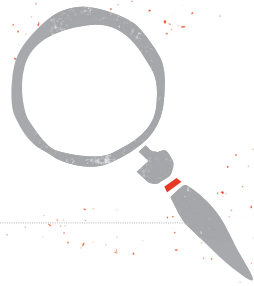
A new theatre play 'Kitchen', inspired by the interviews was written by Gaël Le Cornec. 'Kitchen' imaginatively reveals the everyday life of Brazilians and explores, in both Portuguese and English, how different generations relate to London and the experience of displacement. Thanks to the support of the Arts Council of England, this play was presented as a scratch production at Richmix. The aim is to develop the play into a full production.

For more information on how to access the full archive of the interviews, learn more about the project and its past events, discover where you can still catch the production of Kitchen, please visit our website:

**BRASILIANCE.COM**

# TEMPLATES

## IDENTITY FILE CHARACTER



GENERAL PROFILE:

### CLUES

### LIFE-CHANGING EVENT

### THE FUTURE

www.brasiliance.com

Contact: [mariana@stonecrabs.co.uk](mailto:mariana@stonecrabs.co.uk) 07828879237

## Creative Writing and Drawing Contest

An opportunity for the young writers and illustrators of your school to get their work published in a real book this Summer!

An initiative by StoneCrabs Theatre and the Heritage Lottery Fund



An open call for KS3 students.  
Schools interested should contact us before **10<sup>th</sup> March**

### The Bigger Picture

StoneCrabs is currently creating an educational material, composed of a DVD and a book, for the Brasiliance Oral History Project, sponsored by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The DVD displays a selection of interviews that we have produced in the past few months. The book is an extension of this DVD, however, *with a creative twist*. The people seen on the DVD will serve as inspiration for the fictional characters that will show in the book. The book will target KS3 students, and our idea is: to have KS3 students helping writing the stories in the book.



### The Process

#### The workshop

Firstly, we will offer a two-hour workshop to each school involved. The theme of the workshop is **Identity** and will have an end in itself, which will make it interesting to the pupils, regardless of the Writing and Drawing Contest.

#### After the workshop

The participants that feel drawn towards writing or drawing about this will get guidelines on how to approach the writing. The main idea is to merge these characters to the students' own backgrounds and surroundings, creating a unique character and story that are somehow deeply connected to the young people's roots.

It is up to the school how the actual writing and drawing will take place. One option is to link the work to Literacy in the school curriculum; in which case, the students would probably do lots of the writing in the classroom, with the guidance of the teacher. Another option would be to let writers or illustrators use their own spare time to develop the stories and characters, and perhaps have an allocated Mentor in the school, to answer questions and offer support whenever needed.

#### Submitting the work and publishing of the book

Stories and drawings must be submitted two weeks after the workshop takes place; final submissions 4<sup>th</sup> April. Results will be given mid-May. Chosen writers and illustrators will get their work incorporated to our book and a Certificate Award. All schools that participate in this project will also be mentioned in the book and receive a free copy of it, together with the DVD.

### The Workshop

In this workshop, we will set up a dynamic and creative journey for the pupils to learn about the 5 characters that will display in the book. Youngsters will get to know these characters' stories and trace a profile of their identities. In parallel, we will also work with the students' perception of themselves, reflecting upon their own personal narratives, broadening the understanding of themselves and others.

Sounds exciting? Get involved!



#### BOOK CONCEIVED & CO-WRITTEN BY

Mariana Pereira  
Gaël Le Cornec

#### GRAPHICS & DESIGN BY

Colin Berwick

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#### YOUNG ILLUSTRATORS

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Zahraa, Sadiyah Hoque  
and Florence MacLennan.

#### LONDON SECONDARY SCHOOLS VISITED

Haberdashers Askes Hatcham  
College, Skinners Academy,  
Abbey Manor School, Buxton  
Secondary School, Mulberry  
Secondary School.

#### SPECIAL THANKS TO

Tanja Pagnuco, Alan Figueiredo-  
Stow and Franko Figueiredo

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Colin Berwick

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Celso Barbieri, Silvia Bazzarelli, Ana Elizabeth  
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Alan Figueiredo-Stow, Carolina Cal Angrisani,  
Najla Kay, Claire Gordon and Franko Figueiredo

#### BRASILIANCE IS AN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

conceived by Franko Figueiredo for StoneCrabs  
Theatre Company and supported by the  
Heritage Lottery Fund

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Lucy Warren, Claire Gordon, Clodie Vasli,  
William McGeough, Ana Amalia Alves and  
Glauca Orlandin

#### LONDON COMMUNITY GROUPS

Migrants Resource Centre, Institute of Education,  
Latin American Work Association

#### PARTNERS

King's College London, University College  
London, Regent's University London, Richmix  
Cultural Arts Centre, Deptford Lounge and the  
Institute of Latin American Studies

