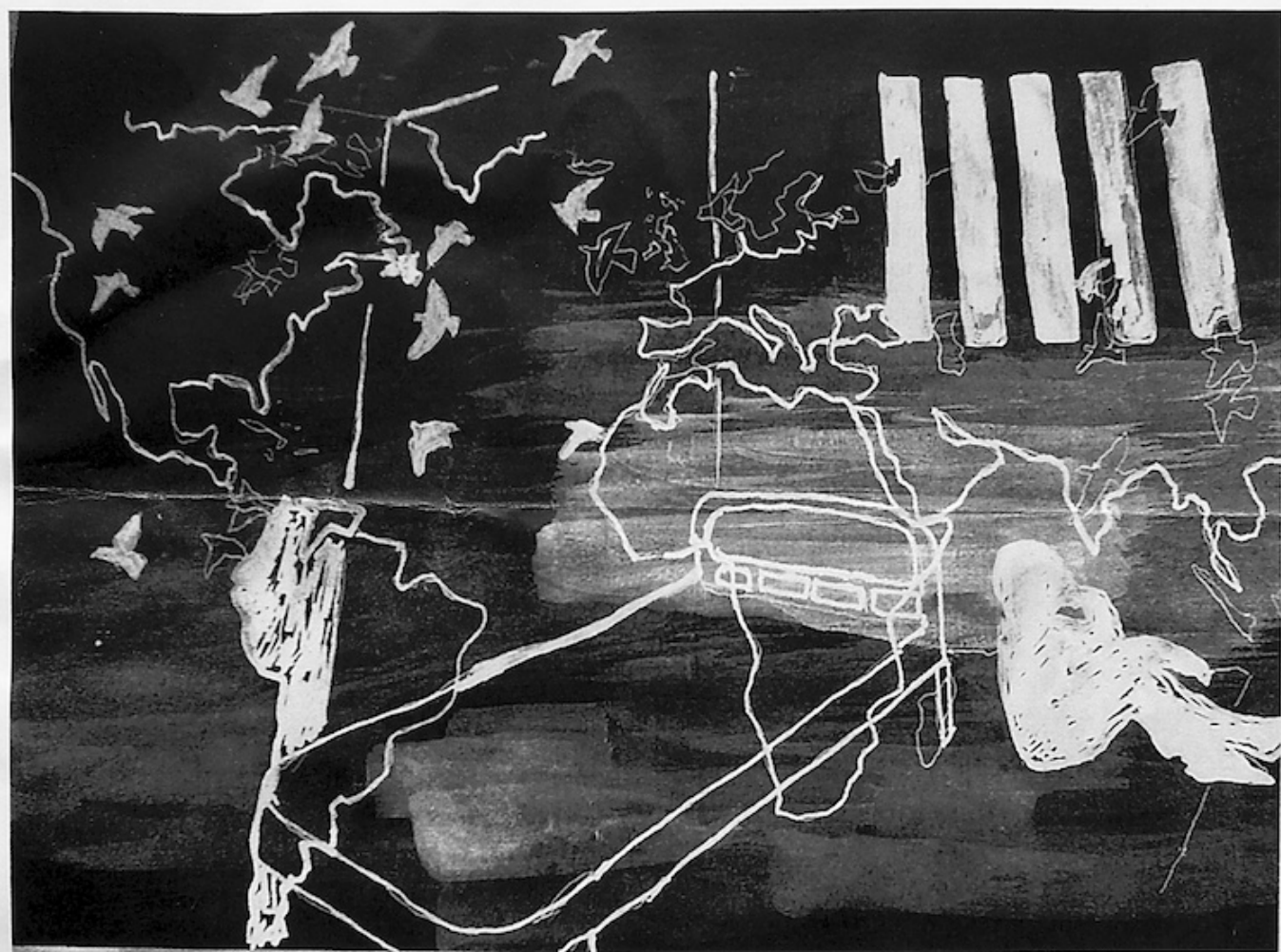


# PRISONERS OF WORDS UNSAID



POETRY FROM UKLGIG

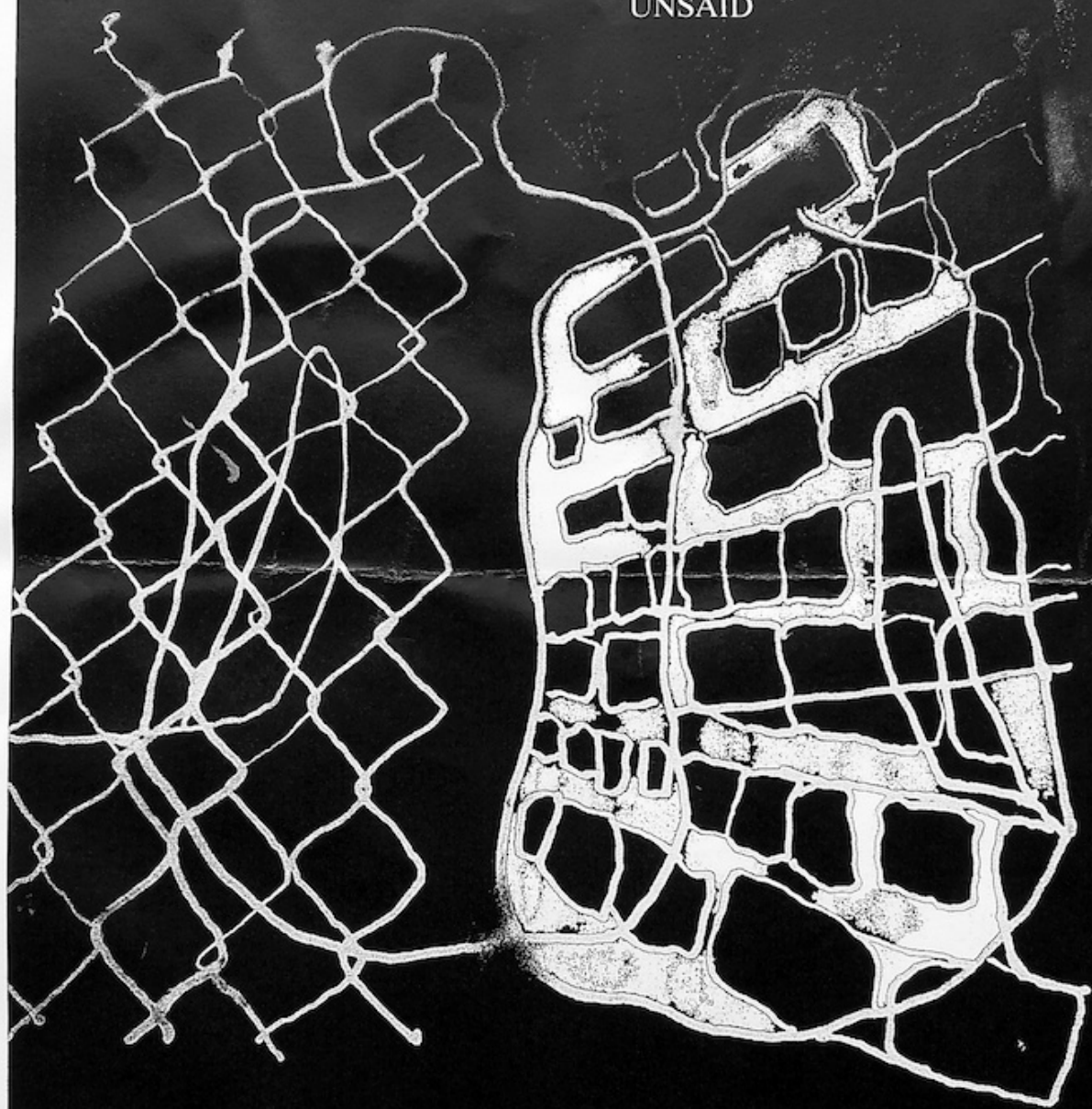
—  
ILLUSTRATED BY KIRI INGLIS

EDITED BY SAM ROWE

A  
PRISONER

OF WORDS

UNSAID



I am a prisoner of words unsaid  
I wanna say, let them out  
I wanna talk, let them words loose  
But this wall that I built,  
Built around me of words unsaid,  
But this prison that I'm in  
Won't crumble, it won't move  
I built this wall myself  
So I should be able to break it  
But these words unsaid are strong  
Stronger than all my might and will  
But I hold on to the fact  
That one day I just might  
might be stronger, oh yeah  
stronger than these words unsaid  
and just break this wall I built  
because of fear, abuse, hurt, slavery, torture  
oh yeah, one day, just one day  
this wall will come down  
Until that day I am a prisoner  
not a prisoner of war  
but I am still a prisoner  
a prisoner of words unsaid  
Am scraping this world  
scraping and looking for peace  
looking for peace within myself  
but then a prisoner of words unspoken  
I still will remain  
It would be easier if I was  
locked up in prison for something I had done  
then at least I would have  
someone or something to blame  
its like being locked up  
locked up all alone  
Every time it's all quiet I hear  
myself breathing faster and faster  
then these unspoken words  
start to speak, my heart races  
my head hurts, it feels like its  
going to explode, like all the  
blood in my body is rushing to my head  
I start to sweat, I get heart palpitations  
then I stop thinking, block them all out  
and stay silent

See these words unspoken  
they are my words  
I control them, oh no  
or do they control me  
see am still a prisoner not of war  
but a prisoner of words unsaid.

### Drowned

Adrift upon the Niger  
Like a bird that has lost its wings  
Clipped at the dead of the night  
By the brutal hands of its very own  
And cast to the waves and tides

The river is threatened  
Like never before  
By the waters that flowed from the depth of me  
My ominous end in sight  
I imagined what my glorious casket will be

Why have I suffered, I pondered  
Like a helpless and thorn ghost  
I have silently rambled the earth  
Yet have I escaped an eye  
That scrutinized with so much scorn and contempt

My heart is entwined with beauty  
Like no man can fathom  
The very reason I am murdered  
This bitter price I have paid  
For the world's awesome ignorance.





Wake up when you're dead

Wake up when you're dead.  
Doing meaningless shit over and over,  
I'm just a third rated star covered in blood.  
See the princess on the rocking horse  
Her polished face looked cool.  
I'm just gonna spill my goals on you  
Under the name of justice.

You can't break my soul under the name of justice.  
Kill your self.  
Think you moron .  
Fall out of line you cockroach right, left,  
and front, back it overflows with despairs and pain.  
They say this anger, this emotion and this passion is  
all a lie.  
Wither ...  
I'm not even trying to justify myself.  
The dark, dark Sunday, the blood stains one day,  
This is the last time.  
Welcome to the garden of distraction.  
The night is cold and long,  
The night sky is deep and wide.

I Doubt It

I doubt it, I doubt it, I doubt it,  
That you'll ever love me  
like I love you.

I doubt it, I doubt it, I doubt it,  
That you will find as pure a love  
as the one you will find in me

You'll have thousand adventures  
without love,  
But at the end of it all  
There's only pain .

You will receive a lot of pleasures  
without love,  
But never true love as I gave you.

I doubt it, I doubt it, I doubt it,  
That you'll ever love me  
like I love you.

Loving you this way is a crime.

### Introduction to Am I Worthy?

I am Jamaican. I am lesbian. I am a daughter who dotes on her mother. I am an exile. Refugee. Persecuted by the citizens of the country I love. Rejected because I do not fill their prescription of union, my love not defined by the strictures of their thoughts. Embraced by a country I never gave a thought until I landed on her shore, figuratively speaking... I've never seen her shore... Compartmentalisation. Duality, no, multiplicity. Fragmentation. So many strands of concurrent existence. All of them me. None of them me. Reconciliation is a lifetime undertaking. Carving a new existence out of nothing at all. I don't write poetry. I make sculptures out of granite armed with a dull penknife. One shaving at a time. And if I break the knife I will use my fingernails. Art WILL be made. I serve up slices of life on a bed of unpleasant truth garnished with hidden voices. Invisible does not mean non-existent. Denial and disbelief do not change truth. They just separate us. I feel ancient. I've lived so many lifetimes in so little time. Denied the right to BE, I wear defiance as an armour but with a persistent apology as a mental condition. The hard-boiled egg has a firm but fragile shell, a rubbery resistant albumen, and a yolk that looks firm, but crumbles to powder to the touch. I apologise for the finished product being always unfinished. I apologise.

I share with you, an open letter to my mother...

## AM I WORTHY?

Mama I tried  
I learnt the lessons you taught me  
And tried to live the dream you fed me  
With chocolate tea  
And roasted breadfruit and saltfish  
To do my best in school  
To do you proud  
Love the Lord with all my heart  
And with all my soul  
Achieve all I can  
And when the time is right, get me a good man



And he will kiss my sleeping love  
And awaken me to the wonders of the world like  
Sleeping Beauty  
He would come with the glass slipper  
And I'd be his Cinderella and it will be a perfect fit  
2.4 grandkids later you would have love bouncing  
on your knee  
And laughing children playing in your living room  
You taught me well Mama  
And I learnt your love  
Though I saw your hell  
And I got me a good man  
And I made HIS life hell Mama  
Because charming as he was, a prince was not my  
destiny  
And I know it hurts you  
And it hurts me that it hurts you  
But you gave me life Mama  
And above all your dreams for me  
You wish me happiness  
You wish me love  
And my happiness is packaged like you Mama  
Loving brown eyes that look at me with utter  
devotion  
A touch so soft you feel it with your heart and not  
your skin  
An embrace that presses me to softness  
She takes me places I never dreamed existed  
And whispers in a voice that makes the world  
disappear  
Love so pure and heaven-blessed  
Awakens passion in me like a raging inferno  
Flying without wings to heaven and back  
My love has curves like we are blessed with Mama  
And wields the power of Venus  
It's in her arms that I blossom Mama  
SHE makes my tree ache to bear fruit...  
It's a choice you made for me when you loved me  
so well Mama  
The universe has answered your prayers  
I'm loved  
We walk in the light, Mama  
We both serve the Lord  
She does not replace you  
She does not replace God  
I still love you  
I still crave your approval  
I'm still your little girl  
And I still wanna please you Mama  
But the choice is not mine  
She loves me, and I love her...  
God loves me and smiles at us.  
Mama  
Do YOU love me still?



## WHERE ARE HUMAN RIGHTS FOR LGBTI ASYLUM SEEKERS AND REFUGEES?

Seeking asylum is not a crime,  
I am just seeking protection.  
Leaving my country wasn't a choice  
I was running for my dear life,  
A safe place from persecution.  
I have been rejected, tortured and raped,  
I have a right to peace and safety.  
I am human.

Lost my dignity,  
Lost my career,  
Lost my family,  
Lost my confidence,  
Lost hope for tomorrow,  
But I have a right to life.  
I am human.

I am an individual and different,  
With different features and choices,  
Accept me as I accept you.  
Treat me as you would like to be treated.  
I am human.

I don't deserve detention,  
I am not a criminal.  
Locking me away is taking my freedom,  
I have a right to live in freedom.  
Fast tracking my case is injustice,  
I have a right to a fair trial.  
Deporting me to a hostile situation is inhuman,  
I am human.



Asking me very intimate questions  
Like how, where or who I have sex with  
In an open interview with interpreters  
Is surely abusing my privacy!  
I have a right to privacy,  
I am human.

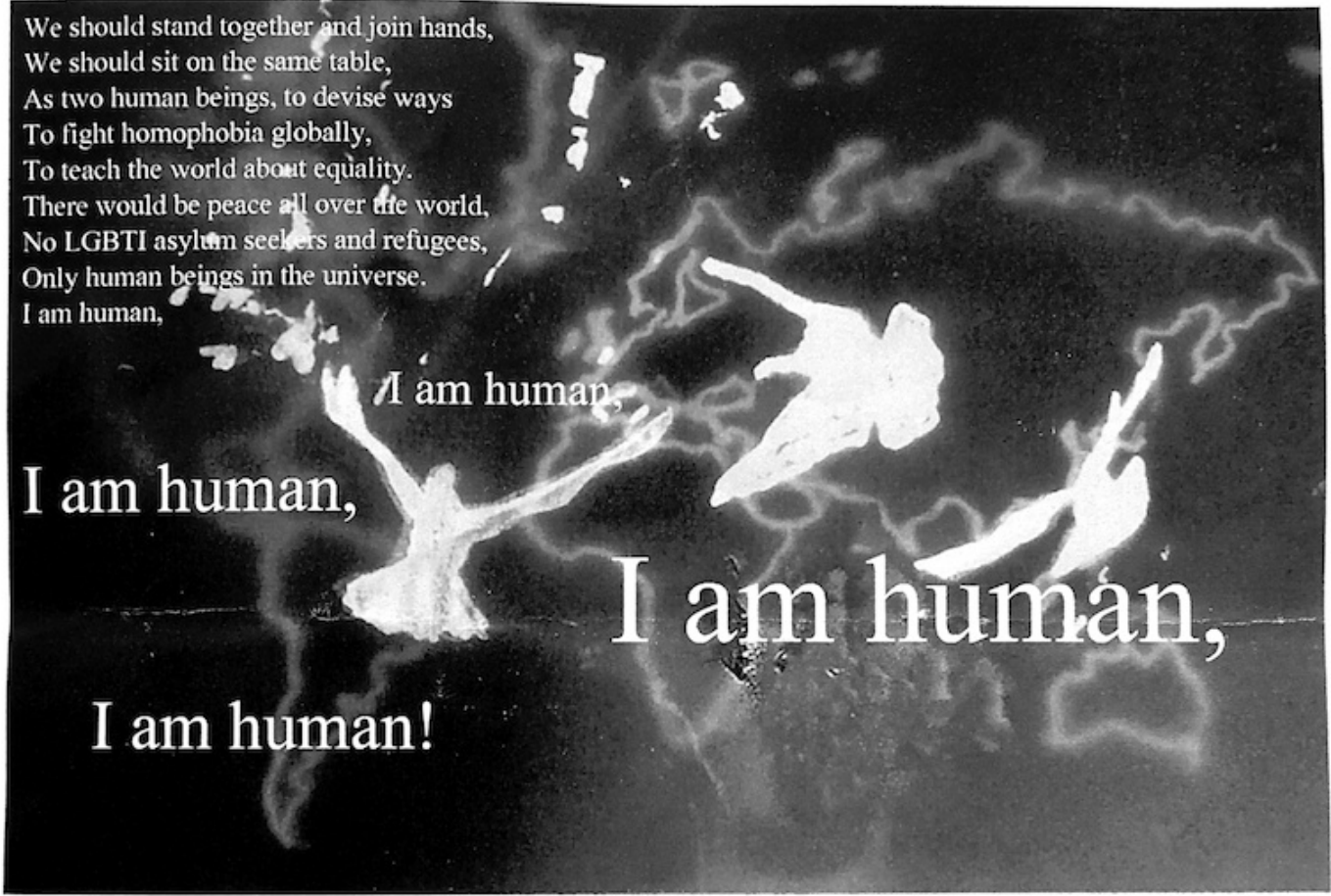
I was not a beggar back home,  
I had a career and property.  
Refusing me to work  
Is depriving me of my basic needs.  
I have a right to medical, food, clothing and shelter,  
I am human.

Denying me a good life is unfair,  
A social life keeps human being healthy,  
Property makes them happy,  
Career makes them responsible citizen.  
All have become a dream!  
I have a right to a career and good life,  
I am human

All I need is understanding,  
All I need is justice,  
All I need is freedom,  
All I need is acceptance,  
All I need is love and  
My human rights respected.  
I am human.

My sexuality should not give you a right  
To abuse my human rights.  
Rich or poor, black or white, gay or straight  
We all have equal rights  
I am human.





We should stand together and join hands,  
We should sit on the same table,  
As two human beings, to devise ways  
To fight homophobia globally,  
To teach the world about equality.  
There would be peace all over the world,  
No LGBTI asylum seekers and refugees,  
Only human beings in the universe.  
I am human,

I am human,

I am human,

I am human,

I am human!

### Awaken

Like the sun  
I watched you blossom  
Into a beautiful man with a beautiful heart  
Like the world has never glimpsed  
Since the dawn of time

Your beauty  
Dazzled like unearthed gold  
Your pureness lightens the darkest path  
Your softness tames the wildest beast  
Your sweetness inspires the greatest tide

You have been unleashed  
From the beyond  
Yet have I seen such an ethereal beauty  
That jolts my heart with such fury  
And blinds my eyes with such charm

Let me be your prince  
Let me savour the sweetness of your bosom  
Let me taste the wine from the richness of your lips  
I would rather have you and die  
Than live eternity without you

### All I want

No matter what we do war will always exist.  
Either on a global scale or just between two people it will always be there.  
It simply will never go away.  
That's just how life is meant to be.

All I want is to love you for the rest of my life.  
I want you to be the one I will wake up with every morning by my side.  
Knowing that no matter what happens I will be able to give you my love.  
As a place you can always come to for acceptance.  
The simple comfort that silence brings,  
When things left unspoken, can still be understood.  
All I want is to grow old with you, to watch our life unfold.  
All I want is to love you forever.

All I ever wanted was to be part of your heart  
And for us to be together to never be apart.  
No one else in the world could even compare,  
You're perfect and so is this love we share.

We have so much more than I ever thought we would,  
I love you more than I thought I ever could.  
I promise to give all I have to give,  
I'll do anything for you as long as I live.

In your eyes I see our present, future, and past,  
By the way you look at me I know we will last.  
I hope that one day you will come to realize  
How perfect you are when seen through my eyes.

There's is pain in my heart that won't let me live.  
There's pain in my life only you can relieve.  
I'm so glad it was you, that you stayed on my side.







With huge thanks to Arts Council England, Erin Power UKLGIG, Jill Power UKLGIG, Sarah Chew, Calo Giametta, Dani Baker and Justice for Gay Africans for all their support, Michael Bell, Alasdair Stuart and Gareth Davies at MBARC for initiating the project and all the participants of The Hearts Unspoken Project through whom this booklet came about.



LOTTERY FUNDED



Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



UNIVERSITY  
of  
GREENWICH

