

DNA Our Stories

Collated by Nigel Hutchinson



www.stampproductions.co.uk

FOREWORD

I am delighted to present this anthology, DNA-Our Stories, which has been inspired by my research programme, Imagining Futures (www.warwick.ac.uk/imagining_futures). The research explored the lived experiences of people with inherited conditions and their families, and highlighted their perceptions of the dilemmas that surround the expansion of genetic screening.

The immersive art installation, I:DNA, by STAMP Theatre and Media Productions was created to represent the findings of this research, by foregrounding the views and experiences of people living with genetic conditions, whose voices are seldom heard. The installation comprises a denaturing DNA helix, with baggage hanging from it, representing both the journey and the things we bring with us as we travel. The installation has an accompanying spoken, and sung, soundscape bringing the words of people I interviewed during my research to life, and communicating the complexity they live with, as a person with a genetic condition living in a world that is increasingly filtered through a lens of genetic medicine. This anthology has been inspired by the I:DNA installation, and has stimulated the contributors to reflect on their own personal journeys, the DNA baggage they bring with them, and what this means for their identity.

I am committed to engaging the wider public with my research, and this anthology and the accompanying event are part of this endeavour. I thank the Wellcome Trust for funding both the research, the I:DNA installation, and this spoken word event and anthology, as well as the partners and participants in both the research and the public engagement activities. Without them all, DNA-Our Stories, and its unique exploration of genetics and identity, would not have been possible.

Professor Felicity Boardman

January 2022

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after Jacqueline Donachie

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MAPPING DNA

MY MOTHER'S FATHER WAS NOT TALL

NIGEL HUTCHINSON

PERCENTAGES

I'm 60% banana
98 % gorilla
99% chimpanzee
99.9 per cent
like every human being

our instructions have been
to the sun
and back
68, 69 almost seventy times

speaking my DNA
letter by letter
would take more
than a hundred years

any errors -
spelling mistakes
most you'll not notice
some you will

NIGEL HUTCHINSON

MAN UP

A boy, a child my world is alight.
Repeatedly giving birth to new sensations.
Perennial laughs, connections of hope,
and lest not forget , the intermittent vexations.

Flashes of pain, whose visits frequent.
He can hook me down to the canvas, coiled and bent.
Man up, man up, the cries float aloud.
I'm just a boy, yet I must be a man , must make him proud.

I'm just a boy, but dare not run like a girl, I master
dad wants me to win, yet Jessica's gait is faster.
What is awry? I do not see.
Is not Mummy just as good as thee?

You chose her, you love her, yet she is a she
Man up, man up makes no sense to me.
Please do explain old man, as I just do not get
why your superiority of alpha causes so much regret.

Man up man up, if I stay as me
disappointment bruises your psyche.
Teach me and lead me, not treat me this way.
What next, "Son don't be so gay"

GARETH HARWOOD

MICROBELLES

Deep in the biome of the belly
live the soft creatures of your body, coated
in the flora that people obsess about.

Antibiotics destroy the fauna too
which to this day remain
undetected by a microscope.

So let me tell you
about these quick and mighty instincts,
some pets, some beasts, all beautiful
and all deserving of further scientific enquiry:

a) First, there is the matriarch swan
that glides along the cavity walls.
When alarmed
her wings start to stutter,
but say...your appendix explodes,
her feathers will stick together
and you will not be warned.

b) Beneath the diaphragm
is a half-sleeping sloth, its belly
in *your* belly like a Russian doll
or a spy— one eye
keeping watch on the aorta
which may start to bulge.
If this occurs he will butt
the roof. It's just a little nudge
to make you breath quicker.

c) The bowels are a pongy abode,
but butterflies can smell
with their feet
so have no need for a nose.
Being perfectly placed
to rule in such squalor
your monarchs have no qualms
about sending messages to your bum.
d!!!) The pancreas, kidney, liver and spleen
are all known for their cancerous gossip
and filthy habit of dumping emotions
in any vein that can be found.

This is why fish have evolved
to breath in blue blood.
On reaching the heart, all anger
dissolves and expels from the lungs.
This is why sometimes we find ourselves
shouting but don't realise we are shouting.

It's all going on in the biome of the belly
where beauty is hidden within the beast,
and the beast is always hiding.

SUJATHA MENON

LIGATURES

Fatter, wider, longer we loom
as the bangles of our grandmothers shrink
to the size of a ring
that although old and borrowed
turn our fingers blue.

On the day I was bandaged
in sari and gold
to stop the ways of the new from leaking,
a fine tinkle of a tune
wrung its song around my neck
and across the cut of each starving ankle.

Old blood and new money dripped
step by step, fresh to the banquet filled with
big bellies of rice freshly squeezed
into gastric bands that I wished were tight muzzles.

Surgery is not an option for the tug in *my* tummy
that knows knots are used for the preservation of life
as well as strangulation and the ties of tradition.

There are other ways to release our throats
and fork our tongues
just as there are other ways to evolve and unravel
using scissors instead of a scalpel.

SUJATHA MENON

WILD TO THE BONE

Jaya-Marie lay curled up in the liver,
yellow-coutured and pissed all week
from Friday night wine.

Jaya (victorious) - Marie (rebellious)
perfectly describes the flight and flow
of her army marching stitch by stitch
to old thatches of bone
long laid to rest in another life.

Those skeletons were rising,
were up for a fight,
and so the battle began between
what was lost and what was just beginning.

Wound by wound— each exposed
to the whims of a headless knight—
and as deep as his sinewy sword—
she counted up all future fuck-ups

...and lived happily ever after

on finding they were all genetic.

DrunK
Not
Arseholed

SUJATHA MENON

TELESCOPIC BRONCHI

Air has ways of seeing
the trajectories of you propulsed
down the branches of each breath
swaying in a storm of stars;
that brief electrical rasp
trailing to the edge of exhale.

This is where we meet,
an exchange of old for new whispers
that rise to rattle the genie of the throat.
This is how we replicate through song.
This is how song coats the pip of an ancient spell.
This is how to dissolve through the membrane of now and then
to reach the moon of every cell—
luminescing like the reflections in our foremothers eyes.

What shall I call this galaxy of ours
held together by the forces of mes and yous
birthed like a planetary cloning?
Or do we remain unnamed,
leaving room for a future shining
that no word could ever catch?

For now, use this chant
to guide you on your way:

*swallow the hollow brick road
swallow the hollow brick road
swallow, swallow, swallow, swallow
then turn left and turn right—
you have reached your constellation.*

SUJATHA MENON

APPENDIX

Sleep will be the one
to shatter this sac
not on my back.
A dream of Gary Glittering
is really Semtex
spraying its swan song
in graffiti, yellow and green,
clogging the cogs
of my ticking machine.

I was only six when the surgeon
told me I nearly died
and prescribed something for
night terrors
day tremors
aches that would turn into years

then he took out the terrorist in my tummy
forgetting to leave its conviction
already rooted to the bone.
Hence forty odd years
not believing
I could do anything right.

SUJATHA MENON

NEW MOON

with salt and moon water
dripping from my fingertips,
i unearth aeons of the shame
carved into my breasts.

i unearth eons of the shame
carried by my mother and my grandmother
in their breasts.

i unearth aeons of the shame
that poured inside of me
through the female line of my ancestors.

pleas glued to my lips,
i unearth the shame held within me
by gliding salt and moon water onto my body
until my skin bleeds
and moonlight pours through the cracks.
under the moon flare,
the sacred and the profane meld into unity,
and my womb reveals itself to me as holy.

as the sun rises,
scintillating gold coats my shame into warmth,
and my ancestresses come to rest within me.

at dawn, i ask my body for forgiveness.

TÉA NICOLAE

OUR LAND IN THE MAKING

i

Procedure:

the past is all there can be—
with agricultural brow,
under my breath,
I ride well-saddled tongue.

ii

Exercise!

Take Vitamin D!

Smear yourself in Bifidus!

*I am all England
between the sheets!*

iii

Told dead,
they envy your retinas,
inspect as you ejaculate,
know no release,
ignite in the face of your offspring.

AYSAR GHASSAN

ALL IN THE WAY SHE CHEWS

Things killed
only to pass through us,
reconstituted soon
as new lifeform,
subsiding eventually
into crude oil.
Ours is to be recalled
as a sentence or two
passed down.

AYSAR GHASSAN

DaNanA

Me

the portion which is apart from the hand that cleaved it
past ripe flat brown archipelagos of independence
travelled far to be where we are now
the curve a scowl or smile depending on the other's viewpoint

SALT

Rime drying in the hagstone's eye
tang of a lover's skin
bite of manzanilla
hard baked cracker's snap
Lancashire crumbling creamily off the block
squaddie's curse and well-turned insult
blood and tears of my children's birth
 my father's death
 theocean theocean theocean

LIZ JOLLY

THOUGHTS ON AN APPLE

Red Delicious, Braeburn, Russet, Chivers Delight
Egremont, Spartan, Gala, Worcester Pearmain
ciderous, sweet, wrinkled, palm and pocket sized
scions slipped onto old stock
bred rough and refined
unravelling back down long country lanes
to the oldest apple tree in the world
a bright Yggdrasil

(with thanks to Neil Richards for the coining and loan of ciderous)

LIZ JOLLY

MY STOCK

The women looked after the children of others and their own
the men went underground to hack out someone else's coal
women made food for feeding the hunger of others
and of their own
men walked country miles to plant and plough someone else's land
the women drew water and brewed beer to slake the thirsts of others
and of those of their own
the men hauled and reefed canvas to sail on someone else's ships to someone else's land
and were taught to think of it of their flag's own
the women kept clean the homes of others and their own
the women gave up their names and made their husbands' their own
the parents of both my mother and father owned a house of their own.
And I have books, a home, a name, children, travels, a garden and freedom all my own.

LIZ JOLLY

THE PORCELAIN JAR

Little coiling fish swim up and still
blue beneath the gleam
waiting under the glaze of
the ginger jar.

Later
I will touch the back of your neck.

Today, my father's mother stood
upright behind the dining chair
watching my pregnant daughter
in the same way she had watched me
when she lived and breathed.

"I love you" is not so very much to say.

If I had to be a vessel
I would not choose to be porcelain
but this loosely painted stoneware one
offering a hollow of slow spiralling green
every day, space and time to be full and full again.

Sit now and eat with me
there are many that I love.

LIZ JOLLY

THE BANANA DNA SONG

I like Bananas but cannot spell their name

Bananas grow
We grow

Bananas catch colds
We catch colds

Bananas reproduce
We reproduce

Bananas have skin
We have skin

Do Bananas feel?

Bananas communicate through their roots
We communicate

Banana trees make oxygen
We take oxygen

We are partners

Bananas have cells
We have cells (about 6 billion)

Bananas have a mitochondria
We have a mitochondria

We have 60% of our genes in common

Bananas have eons of evolution
We have eons of evolution.

But my dyslexia came from my Dad

PETER CROSS

SUN, SHADOW, SHADE

Each morning I rise, eager for your glowing face. I draw up the blinds and give thanks each time you are there to greet me.

Many days I awaken before you. The best days are those where I can sit, undistracted by 'to-do', reading, glancing out the corner of my eye, while you slowly stretch your red, orange, yellow display across my world.

I have rituals to honour you. In the dark of the African morning, we are 'first to the gate'. We give thanks for your ability to awaken the creatures we share this place with and the light you give us. With a press and a click we pixelate the moment and later the image is carried into our memories and home to remind us of the morning we share with you.

But all too soon, your rays are altered. No longer gentle warm caresses. Now stinging, burning, harming. Who are you? Why do you do this? I have greeted you with joy and trust. I have praised you. I have looked with love upon the world and been thankful for all that you grow, nurture, enlighten. Why now turn against me? Why so violently show your power to me?

I know you. You do not have to scorch your imprint onto my skin.

As your rays rise, the shadows lengthen. Is this continuing foreboding? No. Not shadows of darkness. Not patches of fear and grey voice. No. This is shade. Shade which you have made. You created the sun and the shade. You created sorrow and joy. You created suffering and peace. You created sadness and love. The cool protection of your wings are the reminder that I was too quick to rage against you.

As you journey to leave me, to rise on another window, you display your glorious purple, blue, pink technicolour farewell. I have seen your mercy in the world. I have tasted the sweet mango of your rays. I have smelt the dust of the midday heat. I have heard you awaken the creatures and send them to sleep. I have felt the shade of your embrace. I have rejoiced in your presence. I know I will once again eagerly await you. I know you will return to watch over me.

MARIA STUTTAFORD

OPPOSITES

I could argue it's
a waste of my ink
To write of fennel,
pantomimes or Battenburg
When my pen
is yearning for
Cheese, sabotage
and the coast of Brittany
Early over late
Wine over whisky
Salty over sweet
Everything is relative
Each must have its opposite
The inevitable spiral of
Joy and grief
Earth and air
Darkness and light
Held in tension
Our double helix of life.

LUCY JEYNES

ADVICE TO A YOUNG BANANA

I am banana.
I am more banana than not,
Sharing your journey from firm green youth
Ripening to a short instant of perfection
The knife-edge between unreadiness and decay

Waiting half a lifetime for the moment when things
Feel right, realising I already crested
The brow of that hill, yearning in the rear-view mirror
For the top of the curve
When I was too busy living to seize the day.

Do not hold your breath in waiting, green banana
Hanging dark in your warehouse
with only the spiders to listen to your tales of
Sun and endless turquoise sky –
Run for it! Break out! Split!
Dance while your limbs are strong and taut.

LUCY JEYNES

HOW TO BE A BAROMETER

When you uncover a wandering spider
concealed in banana bunches
in the supermarket of your imagination,
it's tempting to yell violently
and step backwards.

How did the creature slip through?
After all the work you've done,
fumigating your own mind
with hours of meditation.
Was there a spider-shaped gap
in your positive thinking?

This isn't the time for logic
and it never was.
Trust that the fruit is still good
and that the spider
has interesting things to say
having hitchhiked from Colombia on a boat.

Eleven days in a crate on the ocean
practising her weatherglass skills.
Tiny sensitive hair covered feet
anticipating the ocean's moods,
knowing, not guessing how the water will move.
If you accept the spider's
unconventional good looks
she might show you
how to be a barometer
in your own life.

SALLY TISSINGTON

SHY OF HOLDING ONE ANOTHER'S HANDS

They gave the grandfather
her English exercise book to inspect,
hoping to squeeze
a kind comment from him.
He showed no interest
in the story content,
boats crashing into rocks
and rescue by helicopter,
focusing instead
on her scrawl on the page.

Her letters were shy of holding one another's hands,
every attempt to join them up
led to awkward collisions
so that even the letters' parents
couldn't recognise their own kin,
whose teenage legs and feet
dangled where they shouldn't,
into water on the lines below.

His own handwriting had saved him.
At 14 he had left school
and was down the mines.
By 16 he'd risen
to the surface,
allowed to do administration
because of his prize-winning cursive script.

Her own handwriting
still hasn't grown up
but the stories have.
It's not just handwriting
that can rescue people
from a life underground.

SALLY TISSINGTON

HAND ME DOWN

You spoke in oranges,
fruit handed down to us kids
from the door of your caravan
raised on stilts.

We once came into your home,
left a flawless blue day behind
for drawn curtains and paraffin lamps.
Waited for our eyes to adjust,
then marvelled at the supernatural
shine from your cat's coats
whose gleam was an endorsement
of daily blood-rich liver,
not ordinary tinned cat food.

Your cats said you could spend your money
how you wanted and it was none
of anyone else's business
as they waved across the garden
like seaweed in the sea.

Now that I'm interested
in hearing the full story,
there's no one tall enough
to reach the shelf.
I think you had scars on your face.
What happened to your fancy carpet life?

Please hand me down an orange.
I want to see if the oranges were huge
or if it was just that our hands were small.

SALLY TISSINGTON

THE TEMPERAMENTAL SATI GENE

Her beauty rare as fragrant fair
with honeysuckle eyes and jasmine hair.
Her heart ripped apart by piercing shards
of misery thrown at her heavily hard.
Chachi-ji's pink chunni swayed her from the stairs.

Mami-ji's limp life dropped china broke
casually ground down by social yoke
She sought salvation on the London Road
the waltzing wheels smashed through her inner load.
As his footsteps fast-faded she never spoke.

Poor Bindi her life was never her own,
shedding millions of tears before she was done.
She disarmed the sadness of her small-town life
in stoic silence like a leftover wife.
And drowned in her own vomit, pills and rum.

Kamala lit devas daily like days of old,
she put on her bangles of silver and gold,
then showered in a tub with gallons of fuel
and lit a match to end her delirious duel.
To put an end to the piranas gutting her cold.

RANDHIR AULUCK

THE (MIS)FORTUNES OF A JAT GIRL CHILD

While the watered-down women wearily wept
the elders smiled and said you were blessed
As Bebe-ji wet and washed your head
at the greening pond where fat flies fed
and bitter-black buffalo rolled and wallowed
snortingly puffing the water they'd swallowed.
The sacred village Santh patted her head
and in your tiny hand your kismet read,
he named you Bhagho and said you were blessed
and despite Jat ways should be blessedly kept.

RANDHIR AULUCK

IT'S WHAT WE WOMEN BE

We are proud Punjabis
in our salwars and kameez
We are justly Jatis
reared on dahl and rotis
We are strong Sikhis
Fierce fighting for our identity

Always selfless in seva
give never to waiver
And must self-sacrifice
if that is the price
of izzat and honour
Virtues woven in her

RANDHIR AULUCK

THE BOX

Which box to tick,
White British or Mixed?
Neither accurately depict
my true heritage.
So I sit,
ponder which to pick.

You see,
if you look at me
I'm white.

My hide hides,
it belies
and denies
me of my pride.

I'm diluted,
my roots muted,
genealogy convoluted.

So who am I?

I remember a conversation,
trying to give an explanation
of how an African tribal princess
was MY relation.

"Why aren't you more black?"
I'd often wondered that,
myself.

But history
proves my family
respected humanity,
despite society
demonstrating racial bigotry.

Fitting that Coventry
is my home.
I'm literally
the epitome
of Two-Tone.

So me being the third generation
with parents Black/Mixed and Caucasian,
I was reduced to an equation.
Or a fraction
"So does that make you a quarter black?"
"Fuck knows, I hate maths."
"Nah I think she's an eighth."

“Does it really matter mate?”

My heritage isn't up for debate.
You would have hoped these days
we wouldn't still marginalise by race.
I'm forced into a box,
because people still discriminate.

Reduced to statistics,
using innate characteristics.

Why?

In the name of equality,
which I agree
is important to achieve.
If only,
we practiced what we preached,
it would be
a practice we wouldn't need.

Where does that leave me?
Do I fit your brief?

What's my box?
What's my label?
What's my place at your table?

My fear,
by saying I'm mixed race
i'll be accused of trying to culturally appropriate.

Am I a fraud,
or an imposter?

Wait; I'll ask
“S'cuse me,
you seen my identity?
I think I've lost her.”

“Oh can't you see?
she's with those that look like she.”

In the white and privileged section.
But that's only my reflection.
Only one extension.
Only one dimension.

Like the box.

KIRSTY BREWERTON

FAMILIAL TREE

You can see her legacy, red curls, long fingers
Bright blue eyes and the roll of the tongue.
His shows up in the shovel hands and green iris
Where they meet fast brains chase letters that bounce as numbers slide
The photographic memory, fades to sepia,
Plaques stack to erase the connections
A generation below the synapses double fire
Senses overwhelmed, language hides behind the thoughts
IQs soar, shapes bounce flavour and the colours of words echo
The multitudes of As, Cs, and G&Ts combine, control, and determine
The double helix finds its target
The viral spiral of fragile X
Their destiny written on the curls of the gene
On each generation their imprint seen

ALEXANDRA JOHNSON

CLAIM ON BAGGAGE

Two chains coil around each other
the curved test of recognition.

Baggage clumps, all blue cases
look the same. Search for ribbon,

braid, band or locket; whichever unique
identifier you had the foresight to attach

unless the aide memoir has tangled,
become detached.

Baggage clumps, all red cases
look the same.

Then you spot it with inherited labels
tape like toxic warning has been wrapped

across the seal and a small scribble
notifies of a malfunction in the system.

It still feels heavy as you lift it,
but you worry there may be missing items.

There are problems with the language,
you don't complain straight away.

The plaque says *Lost*, the man looks it,
has little recognition from your display,

your incapacity to perform gestures.
It's a risk factor of travel.

Your luggage and you
small molecules of life.

NINA LEWIS

IN HOLD

There was a high degree of uncertainty
In those early days of slope

the loss of bearings, the bumps,
the calendar displaying the wrong month,

the gas fire left on
when you went out walking.

Concave in armchair, resting
in the architecture of your environment.

Disorganised papers and a multi-level
system none of the rest of us understood.

Your lounge of component parts.
For a while you conveyed slight recognition

as you lived with degeneration,
the one case left, circling the belt

waiting for collection. Until we
could oversee movement,

form the long oval of support,
deliver you to your onward destination.

NINA LEWIS

I WONDER

from snatches of dialogue in the I:DNA film 1

a conversation caught in passing
on a reel of film inside your head
on repeat, wondering

you do get good days
although I've been poorly
all my life
I suppose we wonder
that's not me
that's not me at all
I think they should hear positive stories

I've had a full life -
reminds me of REM singing that song
wanting me to remember
oh yes I'll do that
I'll do that -
how could I forget

I suppose we wonder
they don't want money
wanting them to have
very, very happy lives

You spend your whole life waiting
waiting for this sword to fall
but who doesn't
who can look the future
in the eye?

NIGEL HUTCHINSON

THE FUTURE'S ALL A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

on bad days the sword of Damocles
good days there's no guesswork anymore
I know where I am
who I am

You say knowledge is power
but its not like that
I can't unknow what I've been given

I'm not a butterfly anymore
I'm tied by genome strings
they're tight
I know I won't win an Olympic race

there isn't a perfect me
but I am me
like you are you
and
nothing else

NIGEL HUTCHINSON

I WONDER

from snatches of dialogue in the I:DNA film 2

It is what it is
no I think
I don't know
yeah
I don't you know
wouldn't really
you know
don't really kind of
ignorance is you know
I'm not saying
it's not rocket science
depends
depends
think I
no
yeah

NIGEL HUTCHINSON

MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY DRAWINGS
after Jacqueline Donachie

- there's a series of drawings
involving nets and string
and heavy shapes
like rocks somehow entangled
weighing it all down
anchoring maybe
or holding back
sometimes
sometimes
sometimes

NIGEL HUTCHINSON

LA COLOMB

There's that Jacques Brel song
about a dove with a torn wing
a rise and fall in the rhythm

you know you're on a journey
that's inevitable
falling forward to its end

a train you've boarded
most things no longer matter
there's an enemy
to deal with
to confound
to understand
to outwit
to confront
accept

NIGEL HUTCHINSON

MAPPING DNA

What I know for certain
are wool weavers in Lincolnshire
silk in Leek, cotton in Manchester
the DNA of my past
the fabric of my life
knitted, unwound, reknitted
in some other fashion
me sitting hands outstretched
holding the skein
my mother winding the wool back
into a ball, ready to start again

NIGEL HUTCHINSON

MY MOTHER'S FATHER WAS NOT TALL

I recall thinking this
when I was no more than three
as he bent to give me a chocolate bar
out of sight of my grandmother . .

funny how things stick in your mind
something of my DNA
marked this moment
forever

no conscious choice
some ringing of bells maybe
knowing the combination
of my storage unit's lock

this is where we keep
the stuff you'll need
always

NIGEL HUTCHINSON

“In light of how grounded scientific research is in the literal dimension, the role for poetry and art to play is even greater - to enable science to penetrate dimensions far beyond the literal and into the metaphorical. Science raises up to the surface what lies beneath. Metaphor can propel it even further up and into the ether.”

“Metaphor is without predetermined form or structure, transcending the preconditioned notions of what knowledge should be. Such qualities allow us to relate to whichever part touches our soul most profoundly. “

“The artist is far more than a simple vector for visualising and materialising the scientist’s data. They provide that data with an alternative reality; it can become an entirely new entity in its own right. In this form possibilities are endless.”

“Artists, like scientists, are also experts capable of shaping the world and solving its problems. Both enter into negotiations with movement, time and space. These are not limitations or subjects for formulas but materials to be sculpted. “

Ben Jack Nash

Ben Jack Nash is a British visual artist based in Strasbourg, France.

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www.stamproductions.co.uk



I:DNA Leamington Art Gallery May 2021-January 2022

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STAMP Theatre and Media Productions CIC produces innovative art events inspired by cutting edge research from academics in the UK and across the world. We work as a collective of artists and creatives from theatre film academia media and art to highlight the lived experiences of diverse audiences whose voices are rarely heard.

The poetry and spoken word event *DNA Our Stories* is inspired by the research of Professor Felicity Boardman. Through our Installation I:DNA we aimed to bring the stories of those who live with genetic conditions to an audience who might not otherwise consider the impact of genomic medicine on our lives.

The poems are inspired by this work but each of us despite sharing 99.9 % of our DNA is an individual and these poems celebrate what is it to be human in all its rich diversity.

I would like to thank Nigel Hutchinson for his inspiration in bringing this collection together and all our contributors for making this anthology.

January 2022

Claudette Bryanston.

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Catherine Elliott Kemp

Christine Harrison

Gillian Hundt

Ben Robinson.

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This anthology of poems is dedicated to Julie Boden a gifted poet.

1960-2021



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