



in the hope of placing roots...

New writing from
Inverclyde inspired
by Of Earth and Sky



in the hope of placing roots foreword

Of Earth and Sky, is a large-scale touring arts project by internationally renowned artist, Luke Jerram. This particular project was part of a poetry installation piece that took place in each of the Dandelion Scotland community gardens in 2022. In Greenock the WORD Inverclyde community writers were inspired by the work of Your Voice in welcoming New Scots and of course the ongoing work creating a community garden at The Drying Green at South West Library.

The line selected to be placed in the local community was drawn from Heather Still's poem Dandelion; 'in the hope of placing roots...'.



Just like the seeds from a dandelion clock this line blew across Inverclyde and planted seeds with other writers. These seeds have grown into the poems included in this volume. Please use the final page to add your own poem incorporating the line '*in the hope of placing roots...*'

Dandelion

I said
we are dandelion fluff,
we connect and float and tumble
in the hope of placing roots
somewhere. Anywhere.
You said
"why can't you just say
that we're lost souls?"

Heather Still

Upon

Star seeds tumbled down from beyond, scattering across the town in the hope of placing roots. In playgrounds, on pitches, down alleys, by ditches, they fell. And grew - silently, unseen, pollinating dreams. Now, on every street, in all places, people take a deep breath and make a wish. Imagining better.

Old Haunts

She wanders the streets in the hope of placing roots, tethering herself to somewhere real again. Daytime is best, at night people notice. She's an echo without source, a reflection in search of a mirror, as old stone is torn down and memories spill out then wash across town. Endlessly.

Genius Loci

I once met God in a bingo hall car park. The God of this place, all rust and smiles.

“We all have doubts,” they said. “But I’ve watched folk drift here in the hope of placing roots, watched them thrive on this shore. That’s something.”

I felt understood. And forgiven

Paul Bristow

GREEN OAKS

From cut's rust bracken,
Cold streams spill
In timeless rush,
In breathed melancholy,
Thread an ancient route
Passed noiseless yards
Stiff cranes
And steel draped shells
Of once loud homes,
To a fertile shore
Lapped by shimmering firth,
There, rooted solid,
A wood of stout green oaks
Stare to busy waters,
In warm embrace
Spread ladened arms;
In the hope of placing roots,
Wait autumn's crisp browning,
Falls first bracing winds.

Martin Goldie

Placing..

Placing is a word that could link to,
Living or non-living thing,
That is placed in this beautiful universe.

When you are placed in a place,
You must make the place your own place,
You become a tiny seed,
Placed in a clay pot.

In this clay pot that you are placed
You change to a small plant with just one root,
Gradually grow into a plant where you are placed.
Nurtured by the people around you,

You are exposed to the warmth, love, and care,
Gradually you start spreading
Your roots.....
Making sure to find the right path to....
The cool underground,
Where there is.....
'Hope of Placing Roots'

Teruko Tissera

Dandelion Roots

A dandelion flavoured sun
damply dripping its dazzle
from a sky scrubbed clean.

Orange-tinged,
coloured cork at the edges

solar rays soak the earth
in the hope of placing
faceclock roots

in unploughed soil
to tongue florets to local life,
pollinating nectar to sip.

John Moody

Searching

It was evening, and barely summer.
Clouds of thin feathers stroked the sky
like dreams on a
marmalade sunset.

All day long
the eye of the sun
followed me, eager
to tell her story.

But I waited for night
that perfect dome of dark,
in the hope of placing roots
in the glittering net of the moon.

Margaret Grant

Somebody's piece of Pangaea*

A cruise ship passenger spells out "Greenock"
and posts it back home to America.
Swallows carve "Sahara" in summer blue.
A mermaid's smalls flap on lines strung between
timber posts prodding out of the Clyde.
Caravanners stop to fill up at the
most expensive petrol pump in Scotland.
Sprats silver the dishes of larger fish.

Watch them come, not in the hope of placing
roots but in the hope of catching a glimpse
of something shared in our DNA.
Watch them leaving with no shadow in their wake.

*A very long time ago the supercontinent of Pangaea
incorporated almost all the landmasses on our planet.

Sarah Dolan

Dandelion Poem

You sent your resignation letter while many are
struggling financially!?!
Why didn't you pretend – wait a bit to save up money?
You aren't rich – it surely wasn't THAT bad!
I couldn't wait another second.
In the hope of placing roots,
I'm kind to myself by
letting troubles go,
rebooting,
resting.

Sue Ulm

Watering Can

I put on my gardening boots,
In the hope of placing roots,
But then it started to rain,
So I took my boots back off again,
Tomorrow is another day,
If the sun is out my roots I'll lay,
Failing that my backup plan,
Is the wee half-bottle in the watering can.

David McCorkindale

In the hope of placing roots...

As morning falls *in*
a new garden, fresh-tilled soil fills *the*
air with *hope*.
New beginnings, the expectation *of*
belonging, of *placing*,
of nurturing broken *roots*.

Katharine Macfarlane

Found poem

In honour of Hong Kongers and new Scots

How do you deal with grief and loss?
To let go of a place
the unhome.

milk tea soured
playing cello in protest

I remember the day we went to Causeway Bay
we chanted slogans and songs, then shooting started
people were running and I wasn't confused anymore
I had clarity, finally; we needed to leave.
I cried myself to sleep for months;
would we be 2nd class citizens
in a new unhome?

Shed sits on the counter while I make tea
they say I brought Trini to England but
I think Trini brought me

in the hope of placing roots.

Bethany Lunn

“Wherever I Am Is Hong Kong’: Migrants Build a New Life in the U.K.’ by Isabella Kwai, 04 June 2022, The New York Times.

“Hong Kong is strange to me now’: how five refugees are finding their new lives in Britain’ by Tilly Chan, 25 April 2022, The Guardian.

An invitation to write here inspired by the line ...

In the hope of placing roots...

Acknowledgements

Inverclyde Culture Collective writing groups, *The Writers Well* and *WORD*, have explored some of the key issues impacting our locality and produced some outstanding writing celebrating and challenging our local communities. At our monthly Open Mic events we met new writers from across the area, shared our work and supported each other. We have been delighted to participate in events at The Drying Green: A Story Growing Garden at Southwest Library in Greenock as part of the Dandelion Scotland project and look forward to many more inspiring days of spoken word and creative writing growing from the seeds planted in the garden.

We'd like to thank the team at Dandelion Scotland particularly Christiana Bissett Emerging Creative Producer (RIG Arts) for inviting us to participate in Of Earth and Sky and encouraging us to place our words within our community.

Visit www.dandelion.scot for more information on the project.

You can read more of the work produced by *The Writers Well* and *WORD* online at <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/borrowbox> or join us at our monthly Open Mics

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/372794407107>

Culture Collective is a network is made up of 26 projects across Scotland, all exploring community-rooted created activity.

Inverclyde Culture Collective is one of these projects being delivered by various partners and organisations across Inverclyde, these include

- **Inverclyde Council** <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/>
- **RIG Arts:** <https://www.rigarts.org/>
- **The Beacon:** <https://www.beaconartscentre.co.uk>
- **Inverclyde Youth Theatre (Kayos):** <https://www.kayos-theatre.co.uk/wordpress>
- **CVS Inverclyde:** <https://www.cvsinverclyde.org.uk/>

To find out more about Inverclyde Culture Collective upcoming events and activities please visit:

<https://www.inverclydeculturecollective.co.uk>