



STAR

ISSUE ONE



ISSUE NUMBER

ONE

Welcome to Stir, a new arts magazine created and edited by prisoners, in partnership with Motherwell College.

We want to create a platform to showcase high-quality, prison-based art to a wide audience and to inspire future artists and writers.

Prison magazines come and go, usually serving only one jail. The Key (featured opposite), was one such magazine.

Stir is different. It will be found in seven Scottish prisons and will be published three times a year. Turn the pages and you'll find it's different inside. You won't find crosswords here. Or sudoku. Or letters about the prison service. But you will find poems about cash machines, the dentist, slavery and methadone. You'll find stories about losing love but winning a fortune and standing by an alcoholic best friend. You'll also find a familiar face, painted by nine prisoners, to use as a poster for your wall (centre spread). You'll find out how you can be involved in arts projects in your jail, and on release.

More than anything, we hope you'll find inspiration. We hope this issue moves and disturbs and, above all, sets in motion your own artistic endeavours. Stir welcomes the artist in each and everyone from the emerging artist to the more experienced. Send us your thoughts about this issue, your stories, poems, reviews and art work.

We want to hear from you.

Edited by

Benno, Joe, Paul, Robert and Steven.

HMP Shotts.

The views expressed in STIR are not those of the Scottish Prison Service

Stir¹ (vt)
to set in motion;
to move; to disturb
Stir² (n)
slang; prison.

FILLING
THE
VOID



I didn't give pictures much thought until I came to prison. You know what it's like at family events, each one complete with an over-enthusiastic family member snapping away with a camera.

I preferred to hide in the kitchen; after all, there's always time for pictures later, isn't there?

Well, for me there wasn't. Here I am, stuck in a cell with nothing to remind me of home but memories. How I wish I had those pictures now.

Through time, my family sent me pictures, but I was nowhere to be seen in them. I was excluded by location, and this was deeply regrettable.

I painted myself on the left of the canvas, and when it's put on display my family can pose in front of the void on the right. The pictures taken will have me in them, just where I should be.

A proper family snap.

Joe
Shotts

PLEASE FILL
THE
VOID

Please fill the void. Joe, Shotts

Not many prisoner-edited magazines are displayed in a museum but there is a copy of *The Key* in the 'crime and punishment' section of the People's Palace. It was produced in the Special Unit at HMP Barlinnie, a therapeutic experiment for dealing with the most violent prisoners in the Scottish penal system, in which artistic expression became a vital activity.

The Key only ran to three issues, spaced over 1974/75, but it was embroiled in controversy, and seems to have foundered for lack of support in the prison system.

The contributors to the magazines were drawn from the prisoners and staff of the Unit, and some of the visitors who helped to build its reputation for innovation in the outside world. Jimmy Boyle, the Unit's most spectacular success, cut his teeth with pieces that were later elaborated upon in his biography, *A Sense of Freedom* (1977). Joyce Laing, the artist/art therapist so central to its achievements contributed two startling pieces on the symbolism of 'walls' and 'bridges' to issues two and three.

Prison officer Ken Murray explored the meaning of 'professionalism' in the context of the fluid relationships between staff and inmates. There was prose and poetry including some by Larry Winters and artwork on famine, death row in the USA and the crucifixion.

The Key tried to do much more than convince its readers that prisoners were rough diamonds with hidden talents which should be tapped in the cause of rehabilitation. It openly questioned the purpose of punishment, the nature of conventional imprisonment and the wider social injustices which had seemingly made prison necessary. The 750 copies of issue one, and the 1000 of issue two were fully distributed, but mostly to the visitors and external supporters of the Unit, not to other Scottish prisoners, as the producers of The Key had originally hoped.

The Key gives telling insight into an important innovation in the Scottish penal system and could with profit be republished today as a single issue, not only to commemorate the Special Unit's achievement, and the thinking behind it, but because some of the questions its existence posed then remain relevant in the 21st century.

The Key

The magazine of the Barlinnie Special Unit

Mike Nellis *University of Strathclyde*

If anyone has a copy of the first issue of *The Key* that they could bear to part with, I would be interested in hearing from them: mike.nellis@strath.ac.uk



POP GOES THE PRISON

Take a wander up and down the sections of pretty much any hall, in any prison in Scotland, and you'll notice that our cell walls have a recurring theme.



Call for submissions

If you have been inspired to release your inner Pop artist then Stir wants to see your work. Get painting, drawing and printing and send your submissions, via your Learning Centres.

I'm not talking about photos of loved ones, scrawled menchiees, football colours or even pictures of surgically enhanced boobs, although I'll grant you these are universal.

I'm talking about the ubiquitous jail phenomenon of the Warhol-esque image of Tony Montana from the movie Scarface; his heavily stylised face stares moodily from our walls with such regularity that I find myself wondering if I missed the memo where he was promoted to the Messiah. Montana seems to have taken on this level of power; he has become an icon and is revered by us cons. Clearly this image, and the graphic style of representing it, are important to us. It's definitely a cool film and the images are striking, but I wonder if there is more we can do with this style of art, and this specific image. We have started in the right way by borrowing the existing image of Montana, can we now use our art to send out messages like the original Pop artists did in the past?

The term Pop Art has come to describe an artistic movement, a cultural phenomenon, which took place in the late 1950s and 60s in both Britain and America. Young artists at the time found themselves rebelling against the established artists who they found too stuffy and introspective. The world had become full of movie stars, fast cars, burger bars and disposable incomes; the Pop Artists wanted to celebrate and investigate this. No longer would artists have to adhere to the traditional cultural distinctions of high and low art, the unique and multiple, the elite and the democratic. Everything became fair game and was presented objectively without praise or condemnation. The Pop Artists used found imagery, such as photographs, magazine cut outs and package design as sources of inspiration. In fact, this idea of borrowing other people's work extended to the techniques used to create the work. Industrial print methods as well as advertising were used to make gallery art. Some of the more recognised Pop Artists include Roy Lichtenstein, who reproduced panels from comic strips, using the coloured dots and flat tones of commercial printing techniques, altering their meanings dramatically by

playing around with the scale of the images; Andy Warhol, who made literal paintings of soup cans, dollar bills and later, silkscreens of celebrities and car crashes and electric chairs; and Richard Hamilton, who took the images of magazine advertising and collaged them into new, carefully organised, compositions.

Society's addiction to consumption was scrutinised by artists regularly through Pop Art. The choice of elevating everyday, household items to the subject of works of art copied, and mocked, the wanton greed that had taken root in the west. Another obvious area of interest for the Pop Artists was the cult of celebrity and all the hedonistic activities that went with it. For the Pop Artists, movie stars and musicians had been turned into consumable products just like a tin of soup on the shelf in a supermarket. Their images were no more or no less important than a one dollar bill.

Warhol's famous portraits of Marilyn Monroe used publicity photographs, heavily cropped around the star's face; focus placed on her tussled hair, full pouty lips and seductive come-to-bed eyes. In 'Gold Marilyn Monroe' (1962) he printed her image centrally on a large canvas. Her face is surrounded by gold and harks back to the religious icons found in churches. This linking of Monroe and the Madonna is deliberate and is a cutting comment on how society raises people to other-worldly positions of power and veneration.

It's not too difficult a jump to see that the ideas and methodologies of Pop Art are still pretty much with us now with our contemporary artists; whether it's Damien Hirst's suspension of a shark in formaldehyde, or the street art of Banksy who mercilessly makes fun of our modern society. The idea that literally anything can be made into a work of art and you don't need to have the ability to paint in a photo-realistic fashion is very refreshing. We live in a world of fast-moving, celebrity-worshipping materialism and there is a wealth of material at our fingertips.

I'm thinking about Tony Montana again, and wondering why he is so important to us in our little micro universe of prison life. Is he the representation of how tough we think we are? A way of fitting in; if we have a Scarface on the wall we won't be singled out for ridicule? Do we love the film so much we need to be reminded of it everyday, or could we be passing comment on our views about violence and crime? Personally, I think we've fallen into the trap of doing something easy that looks quite good. I'd love for us to start challenging ourselves; paint Montana with a water pistol to comment on crime, on a background of Caramel Wafer wrappers to highlight drug abuse in prison. Make images of guards as Russian dolls, each a smaller clone of the first, to pass comment on the repetitive nature of the SPS, or even a bowl of dog food to vent your disgust at the food we're given.

Being prisoners doesn't mean we stop existing in the world and having opinions on how it's run; the exact opposite actually. I'm sure we all have opinions on the SPS, the government, the judicial system, the ridiculous materialistic nature of our country, the idolisation of people like Katie Price and Amy Childs by our kids, the pros and cons of drug use, violence, poverty, religion, football, science, families, bullying, pop stars, bankers. We're an opinionated bunch. As artists it's our responsibility to comment on what we see, to celebrate or to condemn.

Pop Art has shown us that absolutely any source material is fair game as a method to represent our ideas. Okay, not all our art departments will have access to screen printing processes (although it's a pretty cheap and easy process to set up – that's a note for you education managers!), but we all have paints, pencils, pens and access to photocopiers. Creating original art, that says something about how we prisoners see the world, is certainly doable.

So here we go; a call to arms. Let's take the lessons of the Pop artists and make them ours; let's steal images and fuck them up so we can shout about what's annoying us, what's exciting us and what we want changed. Be bold and don't give a shit what anybody else says, your ideas are just as important as any famous artist. Warhol and his chums have shown us that you don't need to be able to paint like Da Vinci to be an artist; the message is what's important, it's the sting in the tail.

Benno
Shotts



HIDDEN CITY

A site-specific poetry and animation project

(A partnership project with Motherwell College, conFAB, and the SPS)

Over a two-week period, students at Barlinnie wrote poems and produced animation about 45 John Street in the Merchant City in Glasgow; A site often unnoticed by passersby.

The Merchant City developed from 1750 as a result of wealthy ‘tobacco lords’ who prospered in shipping, tobacco, sugar and tea, amongst other commodities. During the 18th century, Glasgow’s position on the Clyde gave its merchants an advantage over other ports in Britain and Europe for goods coming from the Americas and the Caribbean.

However, as well as supplying tobacco, tropical goods, sugar and rum, it was also part of the slave route from West Africa.

The students researched the history of the site, whilst also learning about various poetic styles. Working alongside Inigo Garrido, they also produced a DVD of their animations with poetry recitals. The project culminated with a live event outside the Glasgow Chambers, during which the animations were projected onto one of the archways of the building for public viewing.

The following are just some of the poems produced.

MAXIMUS

I stand dark, bold, strong, rich and pure, watching over these fat-cat dodgy-dealings under tables. Underhand council chiefs, tax thieves, my cement runs cold – chilling. I feel like Maximus: roman gladiator. Marble floors, stained glass windows, oak finished beading, dark sandstone walls, my roof heavy with a hundred and twenty years of the filth of the city. Watching the mice scurrying around my feet, they have lost their innocence. Prostitutes, druggies rushing for a fix. Dancing in the clubs, spilt beer, spilt blood, children crying, bin men cleaning streets beneath me. I miss my first home, grand coliseums, the senate buildings, warm weather warriors. Instead I am here in this dark, wet, cold, rustic city. I was once admired by Caesar! My friend, the Burgh Hall is sick - he has structured metal clinging to his person with workmen changing his façade, oh how ancient we are! One hundred and twenty years of small angry people standing cold and dark in a place that is home for all. Glasgow, once we were heroes - now we are merely ancient memories from a distant past.

David
Barlinnie

A STORY UNTOLD

45 John Street
Glasgow’s City Centre
The heart of the Virginia Dons
And classical architecture
Sandstone, marble
And carved-out moulds
Made from hardworking
Enslaved souls

Up in the cupolas
The lookout for the trades
Born from whipped backs,
Black Africans in chains

The mortar bonding the bricks
Was blood, sweat and tears
The slaves were soon replaced,
They only lasted four years

A key ingredient that put Glasgow on the map
Was the tobacco for the people to breathe,
Don’t forget the cotton that covered their backs
We even refined the sugar for the Massa’s tea

After 250 years lies a story untold
Each brick, each carving and every mould
Tells the murky past of the tobacco underworld
Covered up by the Laids for no-one to know

Darren
Barlinnie

GLASGOW’S LAMENT

Africans being chased across fields
From lands far and wide
To be exchanged for tobacco
Being shipped to the Clyde
Is this the Glasgow that I know?
I guess it’s so, I guess it’s so

Expensive stonework from Italy
Shipped on boats to a Glasgow quay
Spending blood money, we do it well
I hope and pray we don’t go to hell
Is this the Glasgow that I know?
I guess it’s so, I guess it’s so

Armani, Versace, expensive clothes
To cover the souls of yesterday’s ghosts
Pushed to build these sandstone towers
Using everything within their power
Is this the Glasgow that I know?
I guess it’s so, I guess it’s so

James
Barlinnie

Theatre Nemo

Spotlight on the Arts: Every issue we will feature a Scottish arts organisation working in prisons or with ex-offenders. If you’ve been working with an arts organisation in prison, let us know.

Theatre Nemo has been delivering programmes in Scottish prisons over the last 7 years. Most of the work we do is delivered in HMP Barlinnie, but we have also worked in Edinburgh, Polmont, Glenochil and Cornton Vale.

We have created plays performed to invited audiences, exhibitions of artwork and sculpture and we have made short films and animations.

All of the programmes we run in prisons are also available in our community venues. We have a studio space in Glasgow City Centre for the production of animations, we have song-writing classes, visual art activities and a community choir. We also use a church hall in Mount Florida for our main performance group.

If you are interested in taking part you can get information on current projects from our website at www.theatrenemo.org or ask for details at your Learning Centre.

Hugh McCue



Up the Clyde. Andrew, Shotts



Jenny Wicks: an interview

Whilst her art speaks volumes, an hour was not long enough to know the artist. It was, however, long enough to know that Jenny is a woman passionate about her work. Although pushed into doing ‘proper subjects’ by her family, Jenny eventually completed a degree in design at university having never lost her desire to pursue a career in art. Jenny has also worked with people with drug and alcohol problems, as well as other marginalised groups. She is currently on a nine-month residency as a photographer working within the criminal justice system, including prisons.

‘It is an opportunity to produce a body of work about an area I feel quite moved by,’ she said.

Jenny has visited Barlinnie, Low Moss (before it was opened), and most recently Shotts. She will be working within other settings too, such as the courts and police stations. It was suggested to her that she should ride in the back of a G4S van to get a sense of how prisoners and accused people are transported around the country. She expressed a keenness to try.

When asked what she hopes to achieve from her residency, she said, ‘The way I work is quite instinctive. It’s impossible for me to say what kind of work I’ll produce. I’m trying to move away from stereotypical images of prison. They’re just too obvious.’

Why photography? ‘I think in pictures and process things via images and snapshots. Images can be extremely powerful. You can say a lot with an image, without using words, and reach out to people who find it difficult to process language or learn through traditional methods.’

‘I visited Barlinnie, it was a very intense experience and quite emotional. There are a lot of vulnerable and damaged men in prison.’

Jenny’s photographs (so far) tend to exclude images of people; though she intends to photograph people later on in her residency. When asked if it was a conscious decision or one forced upon her, she said, ‘there’s an element of control, partly due to security restrictions. I wasn’t allowed to take photographs of prisoners.’

Jenny’s work looks at the connection between how lived-in spaces are constructed, and how they can frame and dictate moods, but Jenny is also interested in the people who inhabit prison. ‘It’s interesting that people have to mark their space. There’s a lot of graffiti. I like looking at the micro details of a space, what people have left behind, and what they tell us about people.’

Certainly when looking at her Barlinnie pictures one gets a sense of history, the people who have passed through there, whereas the Low Moss pictures are more sterile, and speak of an institution in the making, as yet unmarked by all who will share its space.

The culmination of Jenny’s residency will be an exhibition of her work, at the Glue Factory in Glasgow in November 2012. The venue she has chosen presents an interesting juxtaposition. ‘Aren’t prisons often viewed as factories?’ she asks.

‘I want to challenge the boundaries of ‘us’ and ‘them.’ My final piece, hopefully, will be loads of portraits in the style of mug shots, with their eyes shut, mounted on aluminium to reflect back. The connection between the sitter and the viewer will be lost.’

‘I’ll suspend them so the audience have to walk through them like they’re faces in the crowd. My intention is that they’ll clank together, like the noise in prison. The audience will only see the faces, full of contours, becoming a landscape, they won’t know who they’re looking at, prisoners, academics, innocent or guilty.’

As well as her pictures Jenny hopes to include an audio section, punctuated with a film narrative.

Jenny was asked to choose one of her images (so far) to highlight in her exhibition. She chose the image of the In Bru vending machine in Low Moss (featured). An interesting choice, and perhaps indicative of our need as a society to put things behind bars. One can only wonder, and fear, how long it will have to ‘serve’ before it is considered ‘rehabilitated,’ having been re-engineered into a disenfranchised water cooler.

Robert
Shotts

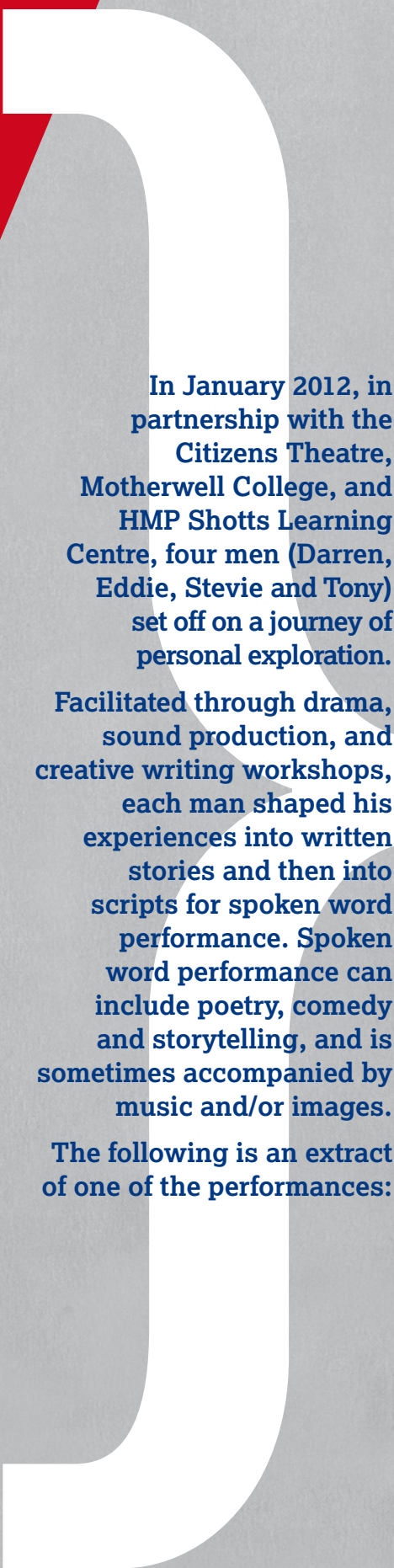




Mona Lisa

Mona Lisa
This piece came about as an art project for the Shotis Learning Centre open day. The mandate was to give prisoners a section of the well-known painting to recreate in any style they wished. The end result was this quirky take on the iconic Da Vinci masterpiece.

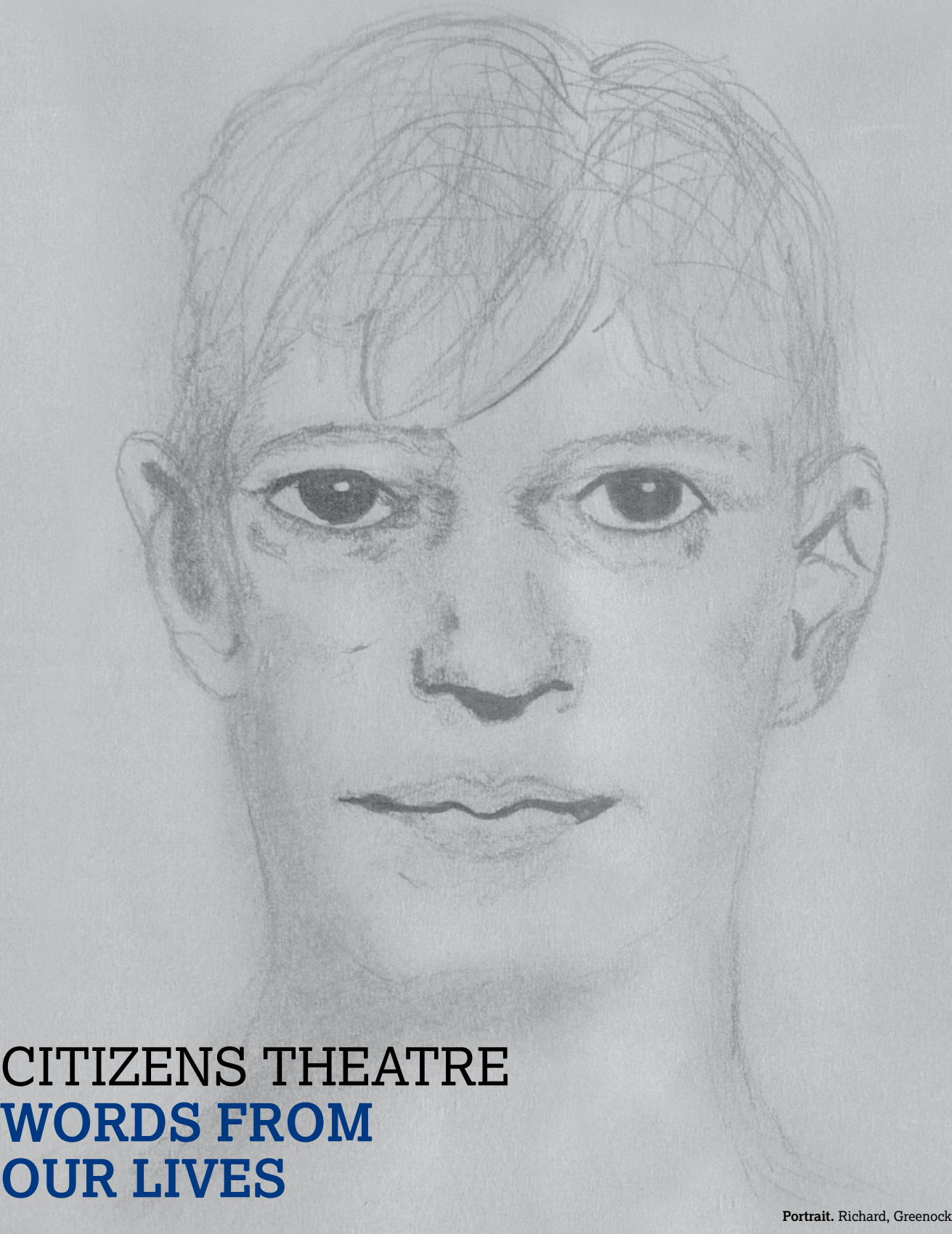
Steven Shotts



In January 2012, in partnership with the Citizens Theatre, Motherwell College, and HMP Shotts Learning Centre, four men (Darren, Eddie, Stevie and Tony) set off on a journey of personal exploration.

Facilitated through drama, sound production, and creative writing workshops, each man shaped his experiences into written stories and then into scripts for spoken word performance. Spoken word performance can include poetry, comedy and storytelling, and is sometimes accompanied by music and/or images.

The following is an extract of one of the performances:



Portrait. Richard, Greenock

CITIZENS THEATRE WORDS FROM OUR LIVES

The Legend of Tam McGuinness

I'd been aware of him since I was 'bout 12 years old. He was the only guy in the whole area that looked and dressed the way he did; old patched faded jeans, long hair, lived-in face, a great big beard. He was an individual, a one off. He was a musician, a singer, and as I was later to find out, a bit of a legend.

Tam had played in Germany on the same bill as The Beatles before they were famous. The first time I saw him play was in the Scotia Bar. Like Tam, the Scotia Bar was special. This was back in day when the Scotia was still the real Scotia, no pretentious people, no designer folkies. It was filled with people from all walks of life, different styles of musicians, hippies, traders, hash dealers. Every night was different, it was always spontaneous, better than anything pre-planned ever could be. As an up and coming musician myself, I was eager to see Tam play. He blew me away that night.

I was eighteen and Tam was thirty three, he was an alcoholic, a flawed genius. He was supposed to have joined The Average White Band, but he just got drunk instead. I was warned but I thought I could change him, I was young, many had tried before me and failed, many had ended up alcoholics themselves. It all started with people buying him a drink to sing a song and ended up with him singing songs just to get drunk.

I moved in with him and spent three month's wages doing his house up only to come home one day to find he'd burnt the house through. A complete disaster. The floor was unstable; he'd only woken from his drunken stupor when the roof fell in on him. When I went in he was sitting there in the corner covered in soot, his face blackened like a miner, in his hand a can of Carlsberg. He raised the can to take a drink, the gold against his black face was comical. Although I was angry I burst out laughing. I asked him what happened and with a straight face he replied, 'the telly exploded.' I laughed again, he looked so surreal, sitting there like some sort of Walt Disney cartoon; black face, black beard full of rubble, gold can in his hand. The next thing he's asking, 'have you got any guitars up here?' I felt like exploding. 'Tam this isn't a fucking party!'

One of the first things about his drinking that stood out for me was when I'd asked him to sing a song, he said, 'that'll cost you a wee whiskey.' This was about 10.30 at night, he had over twenty wee halves in front of him, I said, 'you're never gonna finish what you've got already.' I still had to buy it regardless. I later found out that Tam would get the barman to collect all the halves in a pint tumbler or two behind the bar for him to collect the next morning. That was his cure, his security.

Sometimes when living with Tam was proving very difficult I'd throw him out for a couple of days, sometimes a couple of weeks. One particular episode stands out, having thrown him out mid-week, I saw him in the Scotia that weekend. 'How are you Tam?' I asked. 'I'm fine. In fact I'm staying in a mobile home. It's the business. I just leave the pub and stagger over the road to my wee palace, I couldn't have it better.' 'Are you sure? Do you not want tae come back up the road?' 'I told you am fine, I've got it covered.' After about three weeks I again bumped into him again at the Scotia. I said to him, 'ok, let's see your mobile home.'

He had another drink then reluctantly led me round the corner. I scanned the waste ground in front of the Western Winds pub across the road, no sign of a mobile home, just a clapped-out blue Comet van lying there with four flat tyres, paint all scraped, a real mess. Tam walked over to the van and opened the back door. It was totally bare, nothing there but a blanket, a candle, and a book. I was shocked but couldn't help laughing.

'Right get up the fucking road.' Stubbornly and with offended pride he replied, 'no I'm fine man; it's only a stagger home at closing time.' That pride and stubbornness meant I had to go and collect him, to take him home at closing time.

Just another day in the chaos that Tam called life.

Tony
Shotts

Everything on Merlene

It could have been any other morning. She'd got up and left for work without me even noticing. Except it wasn't. From the second I opened my eyes I had that battle inside between excitement and dread. Recently it had all been dread if anything but mostly I had been void of any feelings. With no job to speak of, just the odd homer, very little money for anything and a wedding day approaching quicker than the speed of light. But that morning there seemed to be light at the end of this darkness. I'd a job to start come Monday, less than a week away.

At first I thought I would have needed to have turned it down. It was in Stirling and how the hell was I going to travel to Stirling every day? Then Auld Paul offered me £800, the exact money Young Paul wanted for his Orion. Her family were all bankers but even so this was a win-win situation. It seemed simple: get a car, get a job, get money, get married then get on with life. Easy! Problem was in every easy plan there is one common denominator that mucks it all up - Me.

Now what was wrong with the Auld Yin handing over the cash to his son, her uncle, and me being handed the keys to the clapped-out, over-priced vehicle to happiness. No, I'd to meet the git at the Clydesdale Bank at 11am and he'd give me the money. I'd then hold on to it until 5pm and go round to Cousin Paul's when he comes home from work and give him it. Now there's a huge flaw in this plan - me with £800 up the toon and six hours to kill.

Anyone else would see the importance of not mucking this one up, too much at stake. That was the dread. The excitement was almost the same. Six hours with 800 quid and the bookies would be open. I could double or treble this with smart betting, give back the original £800, go to Ian Skelly's and buy a half decent car.

I didn't even wash. Out of bed, into yesterday's, or were they the day before's clothes and out of the house before 9am.

I loitered outside the bank for well over two hours (no hurry, eh Paul) watching motors stop at the lights, thinking, 'Aye, a wee Golf', 'no, a wee Metro.' It passed the time but it seemed to have stood still waiting and waiting.

Then he appears, all small talk and smiles. I squeezed a half smile but that was all he was getting. He had me over a barrel and was doing me no favours, lending me the cash to buy his son's squib and into the bargain I hated him, his son and any other human being with the same DNA flowing through them. I love her a hundred and ten percent but her family - vultures.

Her mother was the worst. An auld cow fae the schemes that had now met some half-decent guy with a bit of pay and suddenly she had developed morals, you know, like an ex-smoker - 'That's a disgusting habit.' She was now all 'You wouldn't catch me drinking in the afternoon.' And 'We've booked in for a fortnight in Butlin's.' She was so full of it she couldn't hear the whole scheme laughing. Anyway. A quick lie, 'I need to pop down and see my dad.' And I was off.

Gone were any self-deluding thoughts that I wasn't going to the bookies. The only question was what one. Not my regular. No doubt she'd be in looking for me during her lunch break and the last thing I want to do is let her down. I want to surprise her with my winnings! Positive mental attitude. I heard that Linford Christie say it on an advert and now it was my own personal mantra.



Portrait. Willie, Dumbries

So here I am, 2.30pm, and already 5 x £20 bets down. Time to step up to £50s. First one kicks clear inside the final furlong. Home and hosed. This is going to be cool. 4.45pm, last race and I'm £400 down as the donkey I'd picked crashes through the first fence and decides to saunter roon. I'm screaming at the screen in the hope the jockey'll hear me and decide 'I'll get going and win this for the wee man.' Hey hope springs eternal whatever the fuck that means.

So it's off to the boozer. If I'm pished then I won't feel such a 'huge disappointment' whilst I'm being told I am.

8.15, leaving the boozer and I clock the bookies is still open. No night races. Why? So I venture over and they are covering the World Championship athletics. Hey, they bet on anything. So I get the slip wrote out count my cash and put £378 on Merlene Otty to win the 200m sprint. She'd lost the 100m, or so I was told by the resident pundit/jakey and hello a photo finish with Flo-Jo.

'She was in a photo for the 100m and Flo-Jo won.' Says the auld jake-ball. Not really what I was wanting to hear. Then the result comes through - first Merlene Otty of Jamaica. Yee haa.

£1134. The exact money paid out on my last ever bet.

Got the car, got the job, got cash, got married...

...got caught with her pal, got divorced but hey you can't win them all.

James
Shotts

Are you
passionate about a
particular type of
music? Why not
share it with us by
submitting your
original thoughts
(maximum 500
words) to the next
edition of Stir.

MUSIC REVIEW GABBER

Gabber is a particular style of electronic music and a sub-genre of hardcore techno. The word 'gabber' comes from the Yiddish slang 'mate,' or 'friend.' When asked about the harder Rotterdam house scene, DJ KC linked the word to the music by saying, 'they're just a bunch of gabbers having fun.' In 1995, I first experienced hardcore. A friend loaned me a tape from Helter Skelter, which featured the DJs Clarkee and Brisk. The first track was a heavy remix of the classic Dominator by Human Resource. The moment the distorted kickdrum started I was hooked, and I have been ever since.

I grew up listening to the likes of DJ Clarkee, Scorpio, HMS and Leftgroover. Now I am a huge fan of the likes of Angerfist, Evil Activities, Promo and Unexist.

Gabber is perfect for getting rid of all my aggression and anger. It helps me relax. I have even tried my hand at producing. I enjoy a variety of different styles, from Happy Hardcore to Speedcore, however, my heart will always belong to the harder, more underground side of the scene.

Biog - Angerfist: Danny Masseling, aka Angerfist, has been DJing and producing since 2002. His first EP, Son of a Bitch was released under the alias Menace 2 Society. Around the same time he released Criminally Insane as Angerfist. During his career Danny has released three albums and sixteen EPs.

Performing at live events with MC Prozac, Angerfist has created his own unique gimmick; wearing a hockey mask and hooded sweatshirt. He frequently headlines at the world's leading hard dance events such as, Sensation Black, Masters of Hardcore, Defqon and Qlimax. In 2007, he was chosen to close Sensation Black, which he did in his own unique style with an amazing set. In October 2011, Angerfist was ranked 39th in the DJ magazine's top 100 DJs of 2011.

Album Review: Retaliate by Angerfist
Released in 2011, 45 Tracks, Playing time: 3.6 hours.
This is Angerfist's latest studio album, produced three years after his last, Mutilate. Retaliate is an aural tour de force, incorporating different styles. For me the album is one of those rare things, where every track stands out.

From remixes of classic tracks to fresh sounds, Retaliate has everything a dedicated Angerfist fan could hope for.

Stand out tracks include, Dortmund 2011, which is a fresh take on the Dortmund 05' track taken from his album Razorbladez, Deathmask produced with Drakz, and The Ugly Side of Life, produced as part of the DJ group The Supreme Team.

Gary
Greenock

Top 10 Gabber DJs:

- / Unexist
- / Angerfist
- / Evil Activities
- / Neophyte
- / Scott Brown
- / Tommyknocker
- / Art of Fighters
- / Tieum
- / Akira
- / Nosferatu



Man on rock. Jim, Dumfries

ROLE MODEL

I was born and raised right, mama did her best
She loved me, taught me well, but couldn't do the rest
I needed daddy there, but I don't think he cared
Mama put in twice the effort but it wasn't fair
Yeah?.. Coz I needed a man's touch
His absence was the reason that I landed in handcuffs
No?.. Maybe not, but it couldn't have helped
Coz I tried to be a man, had to learn by myself
No guidance, could've ended in violence
Though I turned to crime I still avoided sirens...
For a bit, then papers labelled us tyrants
Now I'm in the bin, observe a moment of silence
Coz I'm gonna be a while

Mufudzi
Shotts

THE CALL

'Methadone!' they shout
Dispensed, drank, sipping, drowsy
Back to bed today

'Methadone!' they scream
Irritation, elation
Back to bed to dream

'Methadone!' the call
Meticulously measured
Dispensed, disposed of

'Methadone!' whispers
No-one to know, quietly
Drinking but aware

Mark
Glenochil



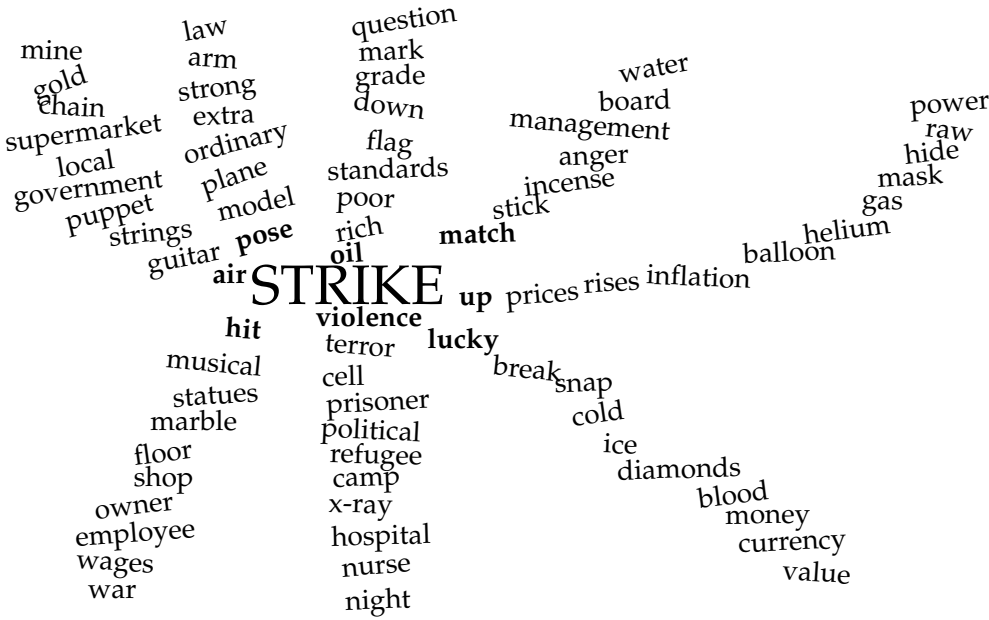
The richest drug dealer.
Benno, Shotts

LOW MOSS

Love of Wonga
Lucifer often wanders
Loquacious olde wordsmith
Lunar orbiter wavers
Livid oncologist wields
Laborious onerous work
Libido on wane
Leaving other worlds
Low over Wiltshire
Loosely obscene words
Lacerated open wound
London's Olympic wrestlers
Learned oenologist writes
Lowry original watercolour
Lawrence Olivier wins
Light omelette with
Latest out Washington
Lusting over worldly
Lowest orifice was
Let ordinary William
Love Oscar Wilde
Lovingly over warm

mankind on slippery slope
Mount Olympus soliciting souls
muses over sardonic soliloquy
menacingly off Saturn's satellite
metal object surgical steel
makes offenders slightly suspicious
masculinity obsolete sexuality subverted
meant occupying shape shifters
monoliths outline southern skies
marks one Shakespearian sonnet
might ooze scarlet secretion
meet outside Soho stripclub
magniloquently on sophisticated sauvignon
mimics oyster sauce soupçon
more Oscars state side
melange of seasonal shoots
Mister Obama's Syrian solution
material objects seems silly
making openly strange sounds
maintain our sovereignty steadfastly
master of sublime supposition
mattress of shimmering silk

Andrew
Glenochil



STRIKE 1:
group visual poem written on the day of the
strike, November 30th 2011: Glenochil



GRAVEYARD SHIFT

In the dark
Trees scratch against the wall,
The bats screech,
Wet soil soaks my knees.

In the dark
The moon shines on the old carved rock,
Friends drink and smoke
While I laugh and talk.

In the dark
The crackling of the hot fire grows,
The taste of smoke and rotting wood,
Slips slowly up my nose.

In the dark
The drugs, perfumed girls, alcohol
And smokes can be found.
In the graveyard shift everyone has a round.

James
Shotts



Nature's Gifts.
David, Barlinnie

Haiku

an essential
guide

Haiku is a Japanese poetic form consisting of 17 syllables, arranged in three lines of 5, 7 and 5 syllables respectively.

Originally, the Haiku form was restricted to descriptions of nature. It typically had a 'season' word, such as 'snow,' which told the reader of the time of year. There would be a contrast in the haiku, focussing first on one thing then on another. The relationship between the two images is often surprising.

A haiku captures a moment, creating a picture in the reader's mind. Instead of saying how a scene makes him or her feel, the poet shows the details that caused the emotion. Today it is written around the world and depicts any subject matter.

Now you understand,
why not give Haiku a try,
and send it to STIR.

FRUSTRATION

Gimme some cash, machine
I shout and curse and push and
Duh... forgot my PIN.

Fingers turn the key
Foot pumping manically
Bloody start will you.

Just a few more steps
My Everest ever so close
Then I broke my leg.

Robert
Shotts

FEAR

Summer holiday
Fear of flying
Millport here I come.

Annual visit
Won't sleep tonight
Crying in the morning.

Eight-legged freaks
Give her the creeps
Terror in her eyes.

Paul
Shotts

REFLECTIONS

Undisturbed vista
Bars and grilles obstruct my view
Close eyes, picture widens.

One more year passes
green, yellow, red, gold, brown, dead
But nothing changes.

Inside out, outside in
Seasonal changes abound
I'm getting older.

Mark
Shotts

HILLS

Hills shrouded in mist
Great dormant snow-capped giants
Tremble to new life

Lindsay
Glenochil

Back o' Wallace. Celia, Cornton Vale



CREATE A STIR

Want to see your art work on the front cover?

We are particularly interested in 'traditional' prison art, for a special feature in the next issue, although we welcome all entries. Send your artwork to us and you could win £20 worth of art materials. Enjoy writing short stories (max 2000 words), poetry, life writing or reviewing books, music or films? Hand in your work to your Learning Centre. Want to tell us about an article you liked or disliked, an idea you have for future editions? Drop us a line with your feedback and your letter could win a £20 book token.

Get painting, drawing and writing.

Let's see what kind of a stir you can create.

Thanks To:

Traffic Design Consultants, Jenny Wicks, Mike Nellis, Hugh McCue, Citizens Theatre and conFAB.

CONTACT

Hand in your work to your Motherwell College Learning Centre through the following contacts

LORNA CALLERY
HMP Barlinnie

KAYE CLARK
HMP YOI
Cornton Vale

JOHN OATES
HMP Dumfries

RACHEL CLIVE
HMP Glenochil

JACCI STOYLE
HMP Greenock

RUTH FACCHINI
HMP Low Moss

KATE HENDRY
HMP Prison Shotts



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