

SEPTEMBER

Writing from online 'Zoom' workshops (send anything to share)

People write at home and exchange their work via email, post and at regular online 'Zoom' meetings on Tuesdays at 10.30:

Naked (Bill)

Stripped back, bare, exposed, defenceless. Is this everyone's constant unending position? Are we continually, minute by minute, in receipt of life and breath; we came with nothing and we will leave with nothing. The utter splendour, vibrancy, majesty of everything around us, vast oceans, glorious skies, trees, flowers, animals, birds, insects are all waiting on the one life.

The step to freedom (Jon)

Stark choices, The thrumming of the noises, The rat-a-tat of the voices? A lost soul secretly breaks into pieces. A foot hovers off the platforms' edge Wanting to be taken from this ledge. A dark step into oblivion, Into a brittle blackness of deep obsidian. What halts that final death stay pledge? A worry it may be a miss-step to hell? Can it really be a religious hangover, That somehow maintains this earthly anchor? I've seen myself take that step a thousand times, I've longed to have the strength to leave this life. I've surrendered in every battle to prevent this rout, My volcano of emotions have erupted out, So ugly, I'm a coward, a failure, I'm toxic, A scared, broken boy with twisted logic. The step to freedom I eventually take, Away from this nightmare I eventually wake.

Mask (Marion)

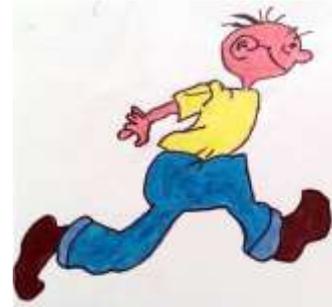
A mask covers a lot of things as well as protects, it covers your expression and feelings, babies born today won't know who is who, or their own mother's face. My own grandchildren have just been to visit me, all wearing different coloured masks, and didn't remove them, they popped their sweets under the mask, thinking this was the right thing to do. I wonder how long this will go on, and how it will affect young children. Their attitudes have changed, not going to school, and constantly being with the same people. but it has to be. to keep us safe. and be sure we have a future.

Skins (Mary)

Wash your face with soap and water and pat it dry. Put your hair in a band; Kleenex into the neckline of your dress. Line up false eyelashes, eye liner, brow pencil, mascara, shader, lipstick.

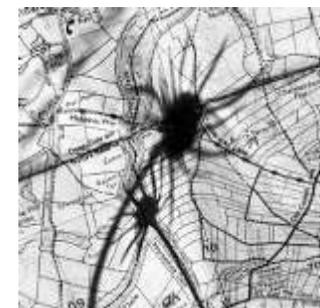
Big splotches of Pancake over face and neck. Pat it all over, gently. There. An expressionless mask on which you can draw Bardot, Shrimp, Twiggy.

Keziah, my only black friend, says it makes her look like a ghost, and scrubs it all off, so when we go OUT into the mean streets she, unlike me, is always in her own skin.



Some photos and art, including work inspired by Becca's first pack

Plus a painting Marion sent to Pauline; you may not have Marion's skill, but your BV friends will really appreciate anything you send. The 'running man' accompanied writing of the same title in August.



SEPTEMBER DETAILS

You, our participants

currently contribute to our rent at Bank House and help keep our 'virtual' services going with donations, large and small, in cash and in kind.

You are also supporting one another through this time.

Mask (Jane) Its mask is plain so no one can see; It changes like a chameleon; When needed to smile it does so on command; When needed to show joy it changes like the seasons; When needed to laugh it's big and hearty; But underneath it's really crying, not feeling it can be itself; Afraid it won't be accepted; It wears the mask to fit in with the crowd so it won't be rejected.

Behind the mask (Sheena)
The lights delight, hung with such delicacy, the slightest breath of air causes tremors that make the feathers shiver. Beads like tiny jewels send flashes dancing against the wall. But hiding in the shade a mask exudes a touch of mystery, or maybe magic. Nothing is as simple as it seems.

So ... (Marlene)
So, what else can you do now that everything is done? Windows gleaming, Not an item out of place, Pots washed and put away, Floor squeaky clean ... So, what else can you do now that everything is done? Try praying.



Contact details:

Bank House, 20 St Edward St
Leek, ST13 5DS (Andy collects mail weekly)

Phone: 01538 528708 (calls come up on Andy's tablet; she will respond to numbers she knows and picks up messages weekly)

New mobile: 07760 138395 (use Whatsapp if possible, as Andy's mobile signal is poor at home)

Email: info@borderlandvoices.org.uk

Website: www.borderlandvoices.org.uk

Borderland Voices contact **Andy Collins: working from home**

Borderland Voices

21 years of arts for mental wellbeing



**The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service**

Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2020

Zoom writing every Tues 10.30: All welcome, contact Andy.

Please join our first ever **Zoom art catch-up: Tues 1st, 1.30**; we can share work based on **Becca's first art pack** and other ideas. **Ask Andy for the link** now and in future.

"The innovation, collaboration, courage and selflessness shown by so many across the County during the pandemic has been truly inspirational and uplifting. **As Her Majesty The Queen's representative**, I'd like to thank you for the wonderful contribution you have made during these extraordinary and challenging times."

Thank you card to BV from Ian Dudson, Lord-Lieutenant.

Most of you will now know that **we must leave Bank House** by the end of the year. Andy is currently looking at other possible premises. **How we proceed with in-person activities**, either at Bank House till December or any other venue after that, **depends on you, our participants**. Expect a **questionnaire from Andy** very shortly.