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## Introduction

### Identity And Community.

How does one's story weave into the tapestry of a diverse community? Red, White, Blue, Yellow, Orange, or Green may have stood for a flag yesterday, but today be splashes of color on a canvas representing unity - identities that stand out on their own, but are made all the more beautiful when mixed into the stories of those beyond them.

We have come a long way. Humanity in all its beauty and history does not only encompass what is within our bounds, but extends to that which may be miles beyond us.

10 years on from the first Big Hope conference, once again Liverpool Hope has brought people from all over the world together as one community. The key themes and objectives of the program are learning, experiences, cultural diversity, faith, wisdom, teamwork, developing curiosity for others and much more. The many elements of the program: the keynote speakers, the learning tracks and even day to day conversation allow us to put knowledge into practice.

The Big Hope 2: Young Leaders Congress has brought us the opportunity to discuss what makes us different; a platform to speak about what it means to be from where we come from. With the themes of freedom, equality, conflict, and change - our team aims to share the beauty there is in diversity. In all of these we stand by the belief that though a thousand things mark us different from one another, we are connected.

Our class, *Storytelling, Identity and Community*, taught us one main lesson: even though we are from all over the globe, there is more that unites us than separates. With delegates from the United States, the United Kingdom, India, and the Philippines, this was a very engaging and interesting process for us all.

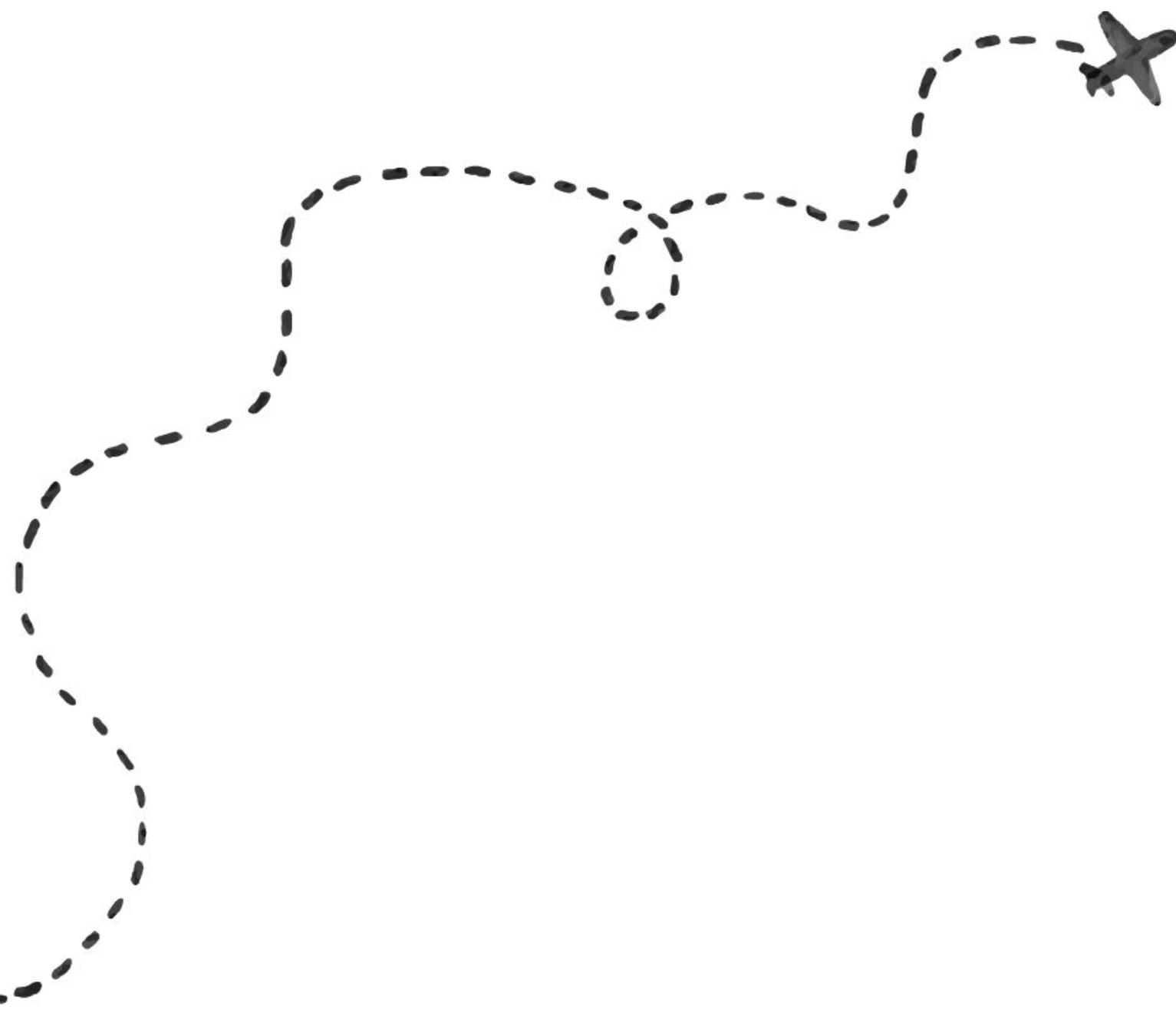


## KALEIDOSCOPE

*By Abigail Morse*

I am a kaleidoscope.  
I look at you and I see blue,  
So I become blue too.  
Your shade of green is different than mine,  
But maybe I'll learn to like it.  
Like a chameleon who can't decide  
How best it hides from view,  
I am changing.  
I love home, but home is never in my grasp –  
I taste the comfort of "place":  
A house with a fence,  
Smiling friends,  
Brilliant laughter -  
And as I walk away  
The sweetness leaves a bitter taste.  
Like the changing colors in my view  
I morph and roll, and someday, might emerge.  
I am the thunder you expected but never heard.  
Like the colors of a storm are soft and dark, so am I.  
Like the white glare of a mirror in the sun,  
I can shine.  
But not myself.  
I am a patterned work of glass  
And beads and lenses.  
Every goodbye forms new cracks among my colors -  
Ones I never want to be there,  
But as I look they become beautiful.  
To some, I am useless. Confused. Incomplete.  
Every fracture, every "one last hug,"  
Every "see you later" knowing that "later" will never come  
Comes close to shattering what's left.  
It comes close.  
And then I see new colors.  
When I look into the light  
The brightest gleam becomes a conversation.  
A joke. A laugh. A friend.  
Our colors meet at the speed of light  
And they fill the fractures in the glass  
Which someone left behind.  
We twist the rim of our jeweled spectacles  
Until, face-to-face, we match.

Not everywhere – we are different, after all.  
Oranges, and reds, and purples are placed  
In ways that we don't understand,  
But we appreciate.  
You're not asking me to be the same  
And I won't ask you.  
But as we look away,  
I won't forget my changing colors were because of you.



## OUR WORLD

*By Berenice McCreton*

We are tied to our cultures  
Told we are ignorant and unaware.  
The Media blinds us with cultural lies  
Stigmatising people with stories to tell.  
But we choice to listen and share  
Because This Is Our World!

Our stories take many forms from dance to music and even the written word  
but together united we can get them heard.  
Because This Is Our World!

Learning and hearing stories of others makes us more aware.  
Together we are challenging beliefs and putting Out the flames of hate and prejudice.  
Because This Is Our World!

When we unite the world becomes fair  
The wars and hurt seem so distant  
Our global happiness unites us.  
Together we stand  
Because This Is Our World!

This is me, I am my own person  
This Is Us , We are our own people  
Together we stand as a community of hope.  
Because This Is Our World!

Because This Is Our World  
I too can join in  
All people alike  
Listening and sharing of our own stories.

It's My World. It's Your World. It's Our World.



AGROUND, By Bianca Joseph



## AGROUND

*By Bianca Joseph*

Being born into a not so traditionally Indian but an orthodox Christian family came with a bit of confusion. The artwork above speaks evidently to this very juxtaposition of two distinct cultures with it's various values and traditions. The current society has a strong presence of the western culture that influences most cultures around the world. A large part of our identity comes from our culture and where we belong. Where is your ground? Where do you belong?

The background of the artwork is the Rose window from the Chartres Cathedral, France. Placed at the centre of it is a self portrait with an exaggerated Indian touch.

These moments of cultural isolation and existentialism is what makes up my identity.

"Where Do We Come From, What Are We, Where Are We Going?"

[Title of a painting by the French artist Paul Gauguin]



## WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE ME?

*By David Fallon*

What does it mean to be Me?  
Is it my upbringing or is it my experiences?  
Am I what people tell me to be or am I who I want to be myself,  
So what does it mean to be Me?

What does it mean to be Me?  
Is it the people I meet who give Me an identity,  
Or is it the community that makes it?  
So, what does it mean to be Me?

I like my sport and I love my food,  
I like my friends and I love my family,  
I like my hobbies and I love my city,  
Yet there are barriers that stop me from being Me.

What does it mean to be Me?  
Is my identity influenced by learning,  
Or is it just my name?  
Is my identity what I want it to be, or is it a community of people?  
Am I defined as a group or an individual?  
What does it mean to be Me?

So, What does it mean to be Me?  
Being unique makes Me individual,  
Being individual makes Me conversational,  
Being conversational makes Me human,  
Being human gives Me an identity,  
Having an identity makes Me part of a community,  
Now I know what it means to be Me.



## MY IDENTITY

*By Ernesta Cole*

Identity.

The fact of being who or what a person or thing is.

**character**

**existence**

**identification**

**integrity**

**name**

**personality**

**status**

**circumstances**

Official definitions and top searches of synonyms.

Identity.

The elements that shape who you are as a person.

**culture**

**language**

**experiences**

**beliefs**

**likes and dislikes**

**aesthetics**

**representation**

**complexion**

A definition and words that came to my mind.

Identity.

What others see, assume, expect and define.

**black**

**disadvantaged**

**uneducated**

**ghetto**

**fragile**

**sacrificing**

**inexperienced**

**obnoxious**

What others have classified me as.

My Identity.

What I chose to cultivate and establish.

I am proud.

I love me.

**African American.**

Born in The Gambia from Sierra Leonean descent, my soul overflows

With a rich culture: history, food, stories, faith, music, clothing.

There is more to me than skin color and serotypes.

*Black Is Beautiful.*

**Shy Yet Bold.**

I stand up for what is right and just. I speak out against what is wrong.

Even if the voice is trembling and small, it is a voice that matters.

There are times to be loud and free, times to sit back and reflect.

**Female.**

Softness does not make you weak.

Expectations of overgiving do not need to be met.

It is okay to be selfish with yourself.

It is okay to cry, feel sadness and pain,  
but my inner strength and determination keeps me going.

*To Be Soft Is To Be Powerful.*

**Young.**

Although I do not know everything, I aspire to.

Curiosity, and acceptance lead the way in discovering new things in life.

An adventurous spirit guides me.

There is so much life to be lived.



## YELLOW

*By Kanika Dixit*

where I come from  
I'm told that I'm a girl  
and that I have to sit  
a certain way  
and that my hair should be long  
to enhance the beauty  
of my round face  
and tied up  
to show a professionalism  
that I never wanted.

I'm told to be polite  
and that girls never raise their voices  
because people are too afraid  
that my pleas of help would be heard  
or my opinions could matter  
and make a difference  
not just in the kitchen  
but in influencing taxes and governments.

I was six when I first understood  
the difference between me and my other friends  
I was told to come inside by 7 in the night  
and to wear jeans instead of shorts  
and have pepper spray with me always when I grew older.

as I grew older  
I started sending my location to my roommate when I took an uber  
or always made plans in the afternoon  
so that my mum didn't stay up worrying where I was,  
living at home had its disadvantages at times.

when I moved out  
to study a subject  
that nobody approved of  
I learnt  
that not everyone was afraid of hugging their guy friends  
or sitting on the pavement and sipping on a cup of tea  
with a cigarette in the other hand.  
my whole life,  
until my migration to a different city,  
was all about being proper

and having etiquette  
but it made me into something  
I was never meant to be.  
I wanted to roam the streets in high heeled boots  
and hold protests against the injustices I see,  
some too relatable for comfort,  
and be yellow in the world of black and white and grey.

it took me 18 years to realise who I am  
and who I want to be  
it's your time now.



## WHERE AM I FROM?

*By Sanchit Tuli*

Diversity is a fusion,  
A pool of art, culture, people and their abstractions,  
Amongst, I stand bearing my nation flag with proud,  
For the first time, I recognise that it shines, glitter and stand out in the crowd,  
here I challenge you to guess my nationality,  
I wear kurta pyjama and eat samosa with chutney,  
Brainstorm your head, explore, no cheating through internet,  
The nation is famous for sarees, suits and carpet.  
Have you got it right?  
Make sure that your answer knows How to fly a kite.  
I really don't know whether it is far from you or near  
but we have great pool of doctors and engineers.  
I know now it's being very long and humorous,  
but our nation is second most populous,  
I could not stop laughing seeing your face getting pale.  
We have one of the seven wonders...Taj mahal.  
Is it ok? or should I reveal,  
My national flag consists of orange, white, green and in centre comes a blue wheel.  
Here is reward for correct answer,  
As all of you have made efforts to decipher,  
Whenever you are visiting, mail and meet.  
I would be happy to take you on treat.



## FILIPINA

*By: Trish Andulte*

I look into the eyes of a raging warrior  
Wounded in battle - weapon in one hand  
It was a Filipina in the times of colonial horror  
Fighting for freedom, and justice in her land.

Since then the Filipina has moved onward,  
With capabilities as pronounced as ever  
Today, for different causes we march forward  
Commanding voices clearer, stronger, louder.

Filipina, a symbol of strength and resilience  
But also a mirror of all that is dark - past and present  
Much are left uncertain and at times we sit in silence  
But for inequalities that stir something within - we act in defiance.

What is it like to be a young woman in my country  
That I will leave up to me  
Though history is rich, full, and defining  
I refuse to let it be my single story.



## THE MISFIT!

*By: Vanya Vimal*

Why am I such a misfit? I feel trapped in a world with the largest laid up system with no glimpse of help or change.

And help, help is not coming in my lifetime at least.

I see people like me travelling about, fully motivated and thriving, but when they get back to this land, the land we call our home we're back at square one.

We don't push for something better, we stop trying. We care for ourselves and not the surrounding nor the old lady who doesn't have a seat on the bus.

We forget what being mindful means. I hate it, I hate every bit the facade people have abroad, but not in this (our) "homeland"?

We are enraged when our pride is tarnished or spoken ill about, but what do we do when the people aren't talking? We forget?

How do you call yourself a patriot when you don't really care? Our land is a black hole with no sense of what a warm ray of light means.

Why am I a misfit?

Am I a misfit because I have the continuous desire to effect change? am I stupid and naive or just hopeful?

Will the people change? what does it take for them to? or am i being too hard on them or judging them harshly?

For I am a stranger to my land and the lands around me, will i remain a misfit forever?

Is this a cry for help or a girl that is simply lost?

Why am I a Misfit?

Is it because,..?

I don't agree with the religious minorities being discriminated.

I don't agree with woman being treated like cattle.

I don't agree with the arranged marriage system.

I don't agree with corruption.

I don't agree with dowry.

I don't agree with the governments favoritism that divides cultures.

I don't agree with the ill-mannered.

I don't agree with the lethargy of authority.

I don't agree with the buying the way out of trouble.



## CONTRIBUTOR BIOGRAPHIES

**Abigail Morse** is an American student at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkansas. She has spent most of her life in Malawi, Tanzania, and Kenya, so she recognizes many places as being “home.” She is thankful for the many kinds of people and cultures who have helped form her identity, and the opportunities she has been given to experience the world through a variety of lenses.

**Sanchit Tuli** -sanchit.tuli@gmail.com

Public relation, Marketing, Design, and Brand Management fascinates him the most. He is enthusiastic to work with corporates. His leisure time activities are playing badminton or basketball, gardening, cartooning and networking. Loves to read and learn about sustainable and human centred/ experience design.

**Ernesta Cole** is a sophomore at Hope College in Holland, Michigan. She plans to double major in Sociology and English. With West African roots, topics of diversity and inclusion greatly interest her and she has loved expanding her knowledge of these things and more, during the Big Hope 2 Young Leaders Congress at Liverpool Hope University.

**Berenice McCreton** is a student from Liverpool Hope University. She studies English Language and English Literature. She has taken part of Big Hope 2 as a volunteer therefore has become more aware of the cultural diversity amongst others.

**Trish Andulte** is an Applied Corporate Management student at De La Salle University (DLSU) in the Philippines. She has a particular interest in Literature which she has developed in high school. Her current learning track back at DLSU is not heavy on literary readings which is why she appreciates being presented this opportunity at the Big Hope 2.

**David Fallon** is a Liverpool Hope University student studying English literature. He has been a volunteer for the Big Hope 2 and participated in a brilliant learning track about storytelling and has written his first ever poem within this anthology.

**Kanika Dixit** is a student of English literature from Christ University, India. She has a keen interest in spoken word poetry and has performed in various venues across India. Getting to write for an anthology as a part of Big Hope 2 is a great opportunity that she is extremely thankful for.

**Bianca Joseph** is a recent graduate of Fine Arts from Chennai, India. Being an artist, sharing her art with people across countries fulfils her purpose. She has a passion for music and is ending her year with the Big Hope 2 Congress, exploring different areas of interest before taking the next step.

**Vanya Vimal** is a recent graduate of Fine Arts from Chennai, India. She is a Graphic Designer, a creative, driven individual who is committed to everything she sets her mind to. She works with diligence and she never misses an opportunity to express ideas that could contribute in a positive way; Big Hope 2 served as a platform in doing so.

