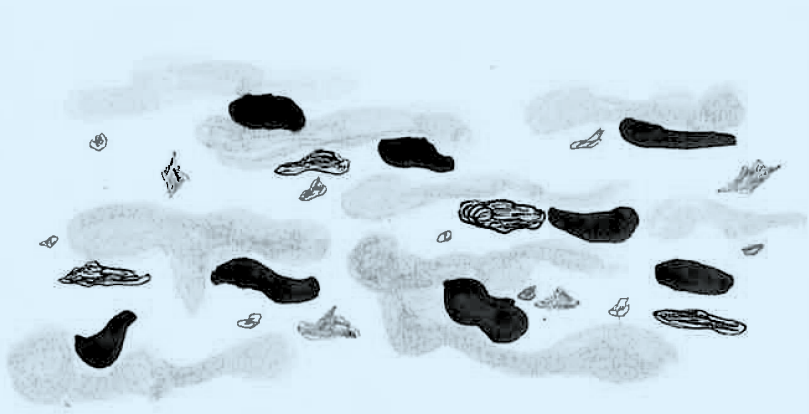


# Nadheem Singh

## humble s<sub>t</sub>o

n e s



**Platform 2 Commissions**

**Abergavenny Train Station / Comisiynau Platform 2**

**Gorsaf Drenau'r Fenni**



Nadheem Singh's commission, *humble stones*, was installed at Platform 2, Y Fenni Train Station between September 2025 and February 2026.

*humble stones* features two poems, developed from research Nadheem undertook in summer 2025, walking and exploring Abergavenny's river systems, geology and natural boundaries; they are expanded by hand-drawn elements from Nadheem's sketchbooks including map notations, train tracks, rivers and fragments. The compositions suggest the convergence and divergence of natural, geologic, political and national borders and question who is excluded, and what is extracted, across these thresholds.

This short publication celebrates Nadheem's commission and his research process. It shares a wider body of poems, drawings and notes, and a text by writer and artist Samandal Sidig, drawing on a conversation between Samandal and Nadheem at Platform 2 in Winter 2025.

More information on *humble stones* can be found [here](#)

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Roedd comisiwn Nadheem Singh, *humble stones*, yn osodedig ar Blatfform 2, Gorsaf Drenau'r Fenni rhwng mis Medi 2025 a mis Chwefror 2026.

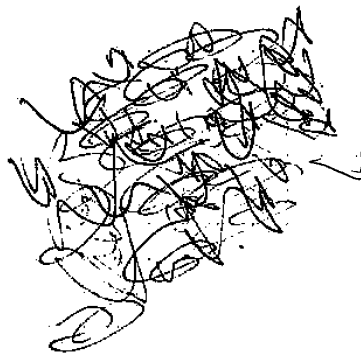
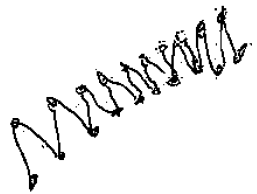
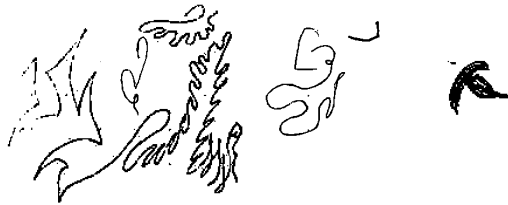
Mae *humble stones* yn cynnwys ffrwyth yr ymchwil a wnaeth Nadheem yn ystod haf 2025, wrth gerdded ac archwilio systemau afonydd, daeareg a ffiniau naturiol Y Fenni, lluniodd ddwy gerdd. Caiff y cerddi hyn eu helaethu wrth gael eu dangos ochr yn ochr â darluniau o lyfrau braslunio Nadheem, sy'n cynnwys nodiannau ar fapiau, traciau trên, afonydd a dernynnau. Cawn awgrym drwy'r cyfansoddiadau o'r llifydd lle mae ffiniau naturiol, daearegol, gwleidyddol a chenedlaethol yn cydgyfeirio ac ymwahanu, gan gwestiynu pwy sy'n cael eu gadael mas, a'r hyn sy'n cael ei echdynnu ar draws y trothwyon hyn.

Mae'r cyhoeddiad byr hwn yn dathlu comisiwn Nadheem a'i broses ymchwil. Mae'n cynnwys corff ehangach o gerddi, darluniau a nodiadau, a thestun gan y sgwennwr a'r artist Samandal Sidig, sy'n deillio o sgwrs rhwng Samandal a Nadheem ar Blatfform 2 yn ystod Gaeaf 2025.

Gellir canfod rhagor o wybodaeth ynglŷn â *humble stones* fan [hyn](#)

## Abergafenni

Convergence you  
Are softly becoming  
Roars the stream  
As she approaches  
Her transition  
Inevitable, now reflect  
Stronger  
Dying everyday  
To become again







Our borders within protect what's soft  
And so our hearts can open

What does it mean to belong on one side of the border or another?

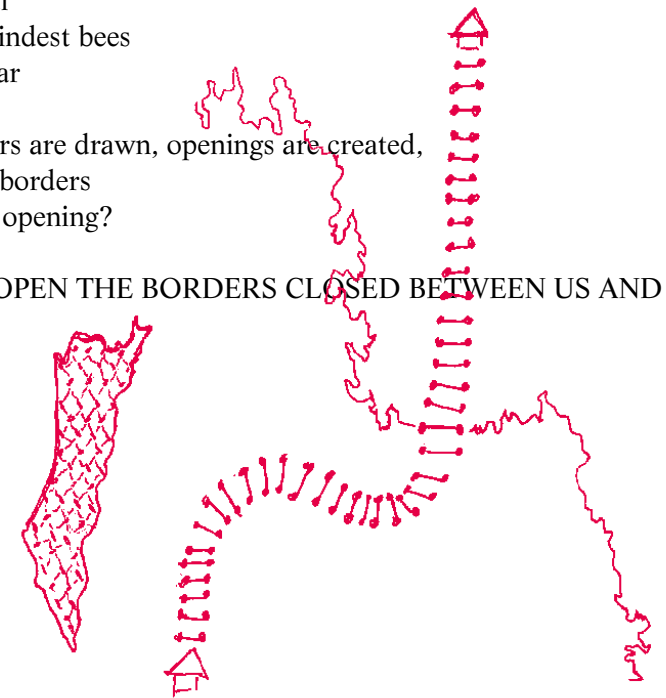
How can one know to belong if they are a stranger to belonging?

...and how do we assert that belonging?

We claim familiarity  
We claim our right to belong  
The wildflowers don't care about the cracks they create  
They don't hurt the concrete  
They don't will for the trees to fall  
Swaying in the wind  
Contently mortal  
in wait for the kindest bees  
Sweet with nectar

Wherever borders are drawn, openings are created,  
But what of the borders  
Which allow no opening?

HOW DO WE OPEN THE BORDERS CLOSED BETWEEN US AND  
OUR GRIEF?



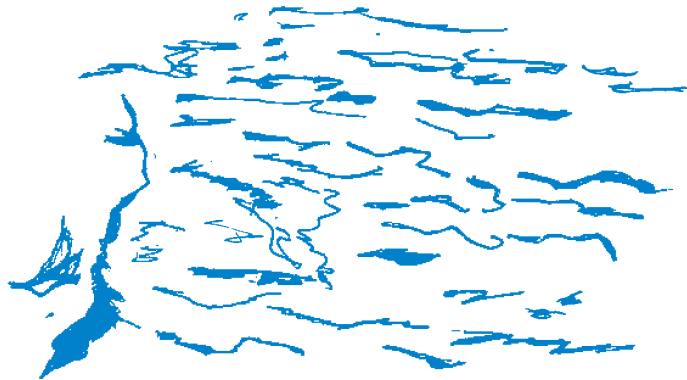
Artist notes in response to  
open-call prompts by writer  
Kandace Siobhan Walker.

Nodiadau gan artistiaid mewn  
ymateb i alwad agored a ysgogwyd  
gan Kandace Siobhan Walker.

## Poem 1

humble stones you  
tread against our steps  
now rest submerged  
After downpours flood  
the veins of this land  
This land chips herself off  
To let go  
as vessels of our futures  
built across acres of  
war against abundance  
This is a war against abundance!

The mountains downpours her pieces  
and so our hearts can beat  
but we still try to teach each other  
that we must  
fight  
for  
our  
claim to  
life



## Poem 2

stuck within  
desire to exist  
at nobody's expense

conditions from the imperial method  
claws away  
at spirit until  
the obedient loses  
the curious

i burp out their attempts at  
destruction subdued into  
“war” which plunders across borders manmade  
implodes community spirit  
within borders deemed “peaceful”

hungry again  
for moments of presence  
spent outside of solitude





### Poem 3

i would refuse to skate uphill,  
cruising is cruising  
i'd rather carry my weight than  
push uphill,  
like swimming upriver,  
why would you swim upriver!  
no wonder of love's ease  
as he swims downriver to you  
like a crab he turns sideways  
and sideways again  
before kissing your right cheek.

i am in love with how  
beautifully simple it is  
to prepare kale, their deep green  
becoming deeper blanketed  
under brown sheets and oven's warmth,  
"It will be like swimming against the tide either way"  
cautiously careful lawyer analogies  
LGBTQ+ asylum  
on headphones while i tear off  
the green green off  
pink pink stalks of this beautiful chard  
maybe if it wasn't for your veins i wouldn't feel  
like an imposter in this country  
where i wedge myself  
within its blades which churn  
churning across  
spirits of dead and alive alike  
until what's left to guide us  
is the noise of their design  
and comrades beside stick themselves stubborn  
as we dream of a world  
with bedrock of soft  
and cut ourselves hot off this friction  
every day, every, day

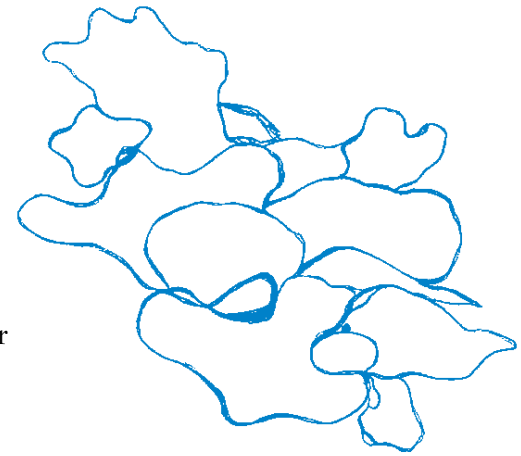
then skate uphill!!  
and skating is always different  
with green through the red,  
when i've taken a moment,  
hips present, held by these legs  
instead of the other way around  
and i skate uphill  
to find it easier

up, up he goes, swimming upriver  
the current doesn't seem to  
hold love back  
how beautifully simple it is  
to rest after we set our heads on fire  
all i needed was the warm bark under green moss  
your heart against mine as we hold each other  
next to the dying trees, the singing creatures  
all we needed was the cold river through our spines.

Up up you can go, on that skateboard  
why walk instead, actually?  
this world is an uphill skate most days  
This country is an uphill skate most days  
And I can't truly know that one for sure

love reassures wholeheartedly  
How activist spaces get more done  
with love alongside rage  
i thought they were both the same  
i stare into eyes of midday sun  
and watch you look at who i cannot see  
you say "goodbye", lit up as the kid you were  
and continue to crab your way  
along the river.

i swim upriver to reach love again  
and i rise out the cold water to walk instead.



## **“I would refuse to skate uphill”**

### **Reflections on a conversation with Nadheem Singh**

Ar Blatfform 2, Gorsaf Drenau'r Fenni, lle mae teithiau'n dechrau a gorffen, mae cerddi Nadheem yn aros, ac oedi. Mae geiriau darniog yn symud ar hyd gwydr y ffenest, llinellau ar wasgar fel marciau amlinell, ffiniau'n ffurfio a thorri, map nad yw fyth yn setlo. Sefais yno'n edrych ar deithwyr yn ciledrych ar ei linellau, yn gosod ynghyd math o dirlun o ddigonedd, galar, a chreulondeb tawel bywyd ar yr ymylon.

“I would refuse to skate uphill,” roedd llinell Nadheem yn berwi'n ddwfn y tu mewn i mi pan ddarllenais hi am y tro cyntaf. “This country is an uphill skate most days.” Nid eglurhad o'r weithred gorfforol o wthio sglefrfwrdd yn erbyn rhiw serth mohono, ond cyfeiriad at y rhwystrau dyddiol sy'n wynebu ceiswyr lloches mewn system sydd wedi ei ddylunio i'w baglu. Fel rhywun sydd wedi tramwyo'r un llwybr tyllod, adnabyddais yn syth y blinder yn ei eiriau. Mae ein bywydau yma'n ddringfa gyson, llethol yn erbyn cerrynt sy'n mynnu ein bod yn nofio'n erbyn y llif. “Why would you swim upriver!” mae'n holi, gan grynhoi'n berffaith abswrddiaeth y frwydr, brwydr na ddylai fod yn anghenrhaidd ar gyfer byw.

Caiff serthni'r sglefriad ei bennu a'i greu gan y system ei hun. Disgrifiodd Nadheem ei gyfweliad ar gyfer ceisio lloches imi fel eiliad o fregusrwydd dwys lle'r wyt ti'n gwbl unig. “Mae disgwyl iti ddelio gyda phopeth ar dy ben dy hun,” meddai. Doedd dim hawl hyd yn oed i'w ffrind ddod i mewn i'r adeilad. “Maen nhw'n dibynnu ar hynny,” ychwanegodd, dacw fewnwelediad iasol i'r modd y caiff y broses ei strwythuro tuag at unigedd. Yr unigolyddiaeth gorfodol hwn yw'r rhiw cyntaf a mwyaf serth, ffin wleidyddol sy'n dy wahanu oddi wrth yr union gysyniad o gymuned cyn i ti hyd yn oed yngan gair. Mae'n dy baratoi di ar gyfer bywyd lle mae'n rhaid i ti fodoli fel uned ar dy ben dy hun.

Mae'r pwysau systemig hwn yn creu ei ffiniau mewnol ei hun, yr hyn y mae e'n ei alw'n “ffiniau oddi mewn.” Cyffesodd y ddau ohonom ein bod wedi teimlo fel “ceiswyr lloches breintiedig,” term sy'n peri penbleth i bobl ar y tu fas ond sy'n mynegi ein heuogrwydd dwysbigol. Roeddwn i'n ei deimlo wrth ymgeisio, yn sicr fod eraill yn haeddu eu lle yn fwy na fi. Adleisiodd Nadheem y teimlad hwn, gan ddweud nad oedd yn gweddu “tôn ceisiwr lloches.” Dywedodd, “Dwi ddim fel arfer yn defnyddio'r gair haeddu... dwi'n dweud wrth fi fy hun nad ydw i go iawn yn haeddu bod yma,” er bod ei amgylchiadau, o fod yn berson traws sydd

wedi byw'n alltud o India ers iddo fod yn 13, yn golygu mai dyma'r unig le rhesymol iddo fod. Mae'n wrthdaro creulon, mewnol, goleddf blinderus arall ar y ddringfa, lle'r wyt ti'n cwestiynu dy hawl i fyw yn ddiogel.

Rhywbeth sydd wedi ei greu gan y byd Gorllewinol yw'r unigolyddiaeth hwn sy'n gwasgu yn erbyn natur ein magwraeth. Yn fy mamwlad, dwyt ti byth yn gwneud pethau ar ben dy hun; rwyd ti'n dibynnu ar y gymuned am bob peth, hyd yn oed apwyntiad doctor. Mae gofyn am help fan hyn yn teimlo fel methiant. I Nadheem, mae'r sglefriod mae'n trafod yn gysylltiedig, yn ei hanfod, gyda chwiaredd. “Des i i'r DU er mwyn gallu bod yn berson cwiar,” er mwyn gallu bod yn fe ei hun, rhyddid na allai ei ganfod yn India. Mae'r frwydr mewnol hon yn cael ei chrynhof yn ei ail gerdd, sy'n dechrau o fod yn “stuck within, desire to exist at nobody's expense,” teimlad sydd wedi'i wreiddio mewn pwylldreisiad imperialaidd. Ac eto, mae'r gerdd yn gorffen gyda hiraeth “for moments of presence spent outside of solitude.” Hiraethu am yr hawl i fyw bywyd go iawn, o'r iawn ryw, sydd fel arfer yn cael ei fyw ymhell o gartref.

Canllaw yw gwaith Nadheem ar gyfer canfod gorffwysfannau ar hyd dringfa llafurus bywyd. Mae ei gerddi'n trafod gorweddian ar “the warm bark under green moss,” dy “heart against mine as we hold each other.” Pan wrthodwyd ei gais am loches, daeth ei gymuned i'r adwy gyda chynllun codi arian nad oedd e' wedi gofyn amdani hyd yn oed. “Dyna pryd wnes i ddechrau deall go iawn,” meddai, “Roeddwn i'n teimlo fy mod yn derbyn gofal cymunedol mewn modd nad oeddwn i wedi ei brofi'n flaenorol.” Dyma'r ateb cyffyrddadwy i'r “war against abundance!” mae'n ei drafod yn y gerdd gyntaf. “Dwi'n gweld y math hwn o gariad fel ffurf ar wrthsafiad” meddai. Dyma'r digonedd sy'n gwrth-ddweud prinder artiffisial y system, y cariad sy'n gweithredu tu hwnt ac er gwaetha'r ffiniau sydd wedi'u gosod yn eu lle.

Sglefrio lan y rhiw yw'r realiti llafurus i'r sawl ohonom sy'n tramwyo ffiniau gweladwy ac anweledig y tir hwn. Ond mae barddoniaeth Nadheem a'n sgwrs ni yn datgelu nad yr unig fwriad yw cyrraedd y brig. Y bwriad yw canfod, yng nghariad a haelioni'r gymuned, ffordd o drawsnewid y bryn ei hun. Parhau i freuddwydio, fel y mae ei waith yn gwneud, am fyd gyda “bedrock of soft,” lle mae'r sglefrio, pa mor anodd bynnag, yn cael ei wneud gyda'n gilydd.

Samandal Sidig, Rhagfyr 2025



## **“I would refuse to skate uphill”**

### **Reflections on a conversation with Nadheem Singh**

On Platform 2 at Abergavenny station, where many journeys begin and end, Nadheem's poems stand as points of pause. Fragmented words drift across the window glass, lines scattered like contour marks, borders forming and breaking, a map that never settles. I stood there watching passengers glance up at his lines, piecing together a landscape of abundance, grief, and the quiet brutality of life at the margins.

“I would refuse to skate uphill,” Nadheem's line snagged deep in me when I first read it. “This country is an uphill skate most days.” Not describing the physical act of pushing a skateboard against a steep incline but the daily resistance of existing as an asylum seeker in a system designed to make you falter. As someone who has navigated that same precarious path, I recognised the fatigue in his words instantly. Our lives here are a constant, gruelling climb against a current that insists we swim upriver. “Why would you swim upriver!” he asks, perfectly capturing the absurdity of a struggle that should not be necessary for a claim to life.

The incline of this skate is decided and created by the system itself. Nadheem described his asylum interview to me as a moment of immense vulnerability where you are completely alone. “You are supposed to handle everything on your own,” he said. His friend wasn't even allowed in the building. “They kind of count on that,” he added, a chilling insight into how the process is engineered for isolation. This enforced individualism is the first and steepest hill, a political border that separates you from the very concept of community before you've even spoken a word. It prepares you for a life where you must exist as a singular unit.

This systemic pressure creates its own internal borders, what he calls “borders within.” We both confessed to feeling like “privileged asylum seekers,” a term that baffles outsiders but describes a very real guilt. I felt it when I applied, convinced others were more deserving than me. Nadheem echoed this, saying he didn't fit the “tone of an asylum seeker.” He told me, “I don't usually use the word deserve... I tell myself that I don't really deserve to be here,” even though his circumstances, being a trans person who hasn't lived in India since he was 13, make it the only logical place for him to be. It's a cruel,

internalized conflict, another exhausting gradient on the climb, where you question your own right to safety.

This individualism is a Western imposition that grates against the grain of our upbringings. In my home country, you never do things alone; you rely on community for everything, even a doctor's appointment. To ask for help here feels like a failure. For Nadheem, this skate is intrinsically linked to queerness. “I came to the UK so I could be queer,” so he could become himself, a freedom he couldn't find in India. This internal battle is captured in his second poem, which starts from a place of being “stuck within, desire to exist at nobody's expense,” a sentiment born from imperial conditioning. Yet, the poem ends with a longing “for moments of presence spent outside of solitude.” Longing for the right to an authentic life, often lived far from home.

Nadheem's work is a guide to respite against the grueling uphill skate of life. His poems speak of lying on “the warm bark under green moss,” your “heart against mine as we hold each other.” When his asylum claim was refused, his community stepped up with a fundraiser he hadn't even asked for. “That's actually when I started to understand,” he said, “I feel like I was kind of faced with receiving community care in a way that I hadn't before.” This is the tangible answer to the “war against abundance!” he declares in his first poem. “I'd see this kind of love as a form of resistance,” he told me. This is the abundance that counters the system's artificial scarcity, the love that operates outside of and despite the borders in place.

The uphill skate is the relentless reality for those of us navigating the visible and invisible borders of this land. But Nadheem's poetry and our conversation reveal that the goal isn't just to reach the top alone. It is to find, in the love and generosity of community, a way to transform the hill itself. It is to continue dreaming, as his work does, of a world with a “bedrock of soft,” where the skate, however arduous, is always undertaken together.

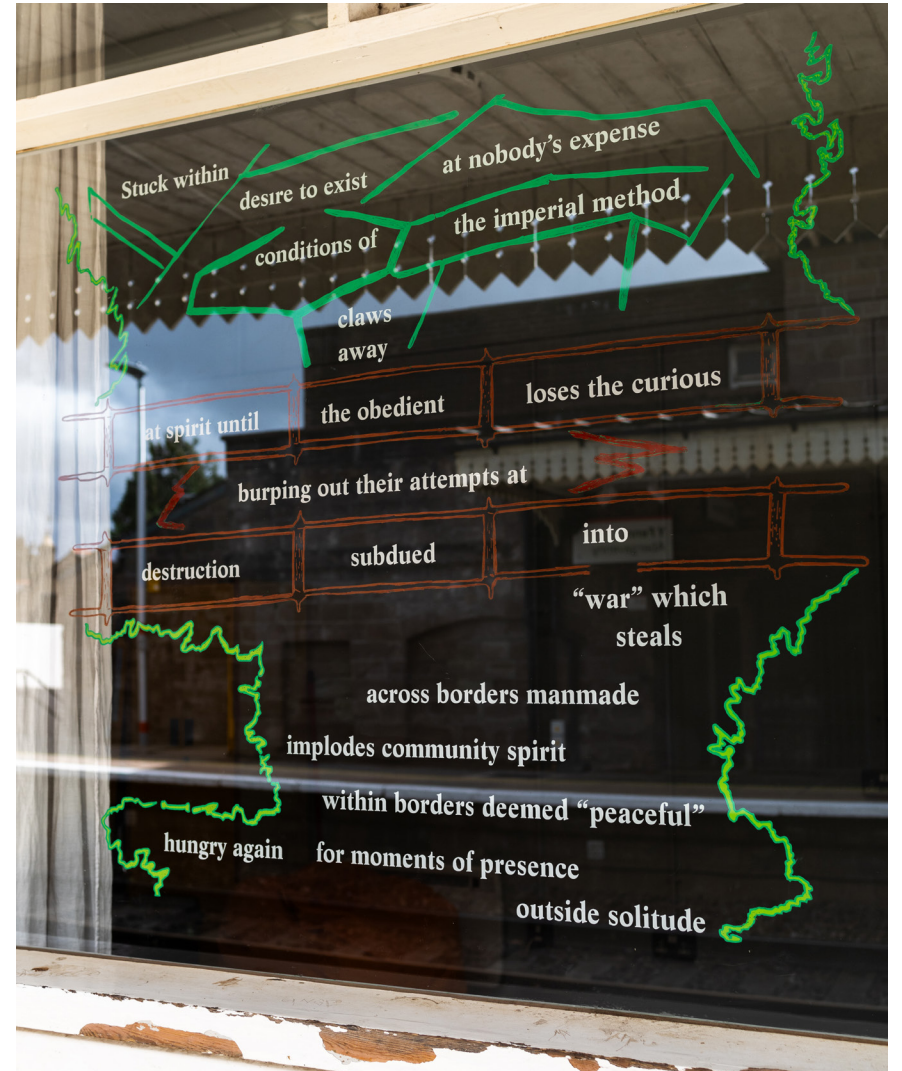
Samandal Sidig, December 2025



*humble stones*, Plattform 2, Gorsaf Drenau'r Fenni;  
ffotograffiaeth Louise Hobson







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Diolch i: Mark El-khatib, Leo Bruno Todd, Alan Bowing, Oner Signs a Kandace Siobhan Walker am ffurfio disgrifiad yr alwad agored ar y thema ffiniau / Thanks to: Mark El-khatib, Leo Bruno Todd, Alan Bowing, Oner Signs and Kandace Siobhan Walker for shaping the open-call brief around the theme of borders.

Nadheem would like to thank the book *Experiments In Imagining Otherwise* by Lola Olufemi for informing this work.

**Nadheem Singh** is an Indian poet, artist, and facilitator. His writing explores themes of reconnection to nature, the experience of migration, and the emotional landscape of collective liberation.

Bardd, artist a hwylusydd o India sy'n byw yng Nghaerdydd yw **Nadheem Singh**. Mae ei farddoniaeth yn ystyried y broses o ailgysylltu â natur, y profiad o fudo, a thirwedd emosïynol rhyddhad torfol.

**Samandal Sidig** is a Sudanese writer and multidisciplinary artist whose work explores memory, migration and the sonic textures of African and Arab cultures. With a background in journalism and media research, her writing explores creative nonfiction, essays and cultural analysis, often drawing on personal and collective histories of displacement. Working across text and sound, she creates narrative spaces that invite reflection, dialogue and sensory engagement.

Sgwennwr ac artist amlddisgyblaethol Swdanaidd yw **Samandal Sidig** sy'n archwilio atgofion, mudo, yn ogystal â gweadau seinyddol diwylliannau Affricanaidd ac Arabaidd. Gyda chefnidir mewn newyddiaduraeth ac ymchwil ar y cyfryngau, mae hi'n sgwennu'n ffeithiol greadigol, yn draethodau a dadansoddiadau diwylliannol. Mae'n defnyddio hanesion personol a chasglebol yn ymwneud â dadleoli yn ei gwaith. Wrth greu gwaith testun a sain, mae'n llunio gofodau storïol sy'n gwahodd myfyrdod, deialog ac ymgysylltiad synhwyrdd.



