Audio transcripts

Troy
myth and reality

Please do not remove from the exhibition
Audio transcript of the opening lines of Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, about 700 BC, read in the original Greek and in English translation, and of Virgil's Aeneid, 29-19 BC, read in the original Latin and in English translation

μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος οὐλομένην, ἣ μυρί᾽ Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε᾽ ἔθηκε

Rage–Goddess, sing the rage of Peleus’ son Achilles, murderous, doomed, that cost the Greeks countless losses, hurling down to the House of Death so many sturdy souls, great fighters' souls, but made their bodies carrion, feasts for the dogs and birds, and the will of Zeus was moving toward its end.

Homer, Iliad, about 700 BC
Tell me about a complicated man.
Muse, tell me how he wandered and was lost when he had wrecked the holy town of Troy, and where he went, and who he met, the pain he suffered in the storms at sea, and how he worked to save his life and bring his men back home.

Homer, *Odyssey*, about 700 BC

Arms and a man I sing, the first from Troy, A fated exile to Lavinian shores In Italy. On land and sea, divine will – And Juno’s unforgetting rage – harassed him. War racked him too, until he set his city And gods in Latium.

A member of Waterloo Uncovered, army veteran Robert Cummings, talks about his experience of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and responds to Henry Fuseli’s drawing *Achilles Lamenting for Patroclus*.

Hi, my name is Robert Cummings. I am an army veteran. I served with the first battalion Scots Guards from 1989 to 2001 and I saw active service during Op. Granby 91 and six tours of Northern Ireland.

The main thing that got my attention and my imagination was the painting of Achilles with Patroclus. Because unfortunately I have a trauma that relates to that perfectly. Because one of the tours when we were in Northern Ireland, me and one of my...well, it was my best mate, were out patrolling one night and we got contacted by a sniper. And he got hit once in the chest and once in the neck. And I was the medic at the time as well so I was cradling him in my arms, and I knew he was dying, and I couldn’t do anything to...to save his life. We’d grown up quite a lot together. We were both really quite young and we did a lot together and um, yea, it just, it was, it’s, it’s hard to describe really the emotions that you feel when something like that happens and you feel helpless to save their lives.

From that I have something called survivor’s guilt, which is really quite, um, it can be really quite devastating really. It’s, it makes you feel empty. It makes you feel worthless. So that is how I think Achilles would have felt. He would have felt this emptiness, this devastation, the bitterness, the anguish, the anger, the desire to...to destroy, possibly the desire to die. The survivor guilt can do an awful lot to you. It can destroy you if you allow it to, because it’s quite a strong emotion to...to...to have to deal with each and every day. Because you...you feel...you feel worthless. You...you...you think to
psychologists, various different seminars and things like that, but please, please don’t give up. Seek the help you need. Build your networks and you will get through it. I’m proof that it can be done.

A member of Crisis, T. S. Bernard, talks about her own life in relation to the stories of Cassandra and Helen

So my name is Stella. I was born in a town called Plateau State, Jos, in Nigeria. Where my mum lived there were constant religious fights, and I guess maybe she thought it was better for me to be sent away, where I can get a better life. And she said I was coming to study. But when I arrived here to the UK, there was no arrangement for me to study. Women become vulnerable in situations like this because they become prey, especially for men, and even a lot of times where women
would have a say in something they can’t really speak. Not literally a voice is taken away from a woman. But they’re not able to speak because they know if they speak that might stop them from receiving something that they already get to receive.

When I was much younger, about 18, I was living in a house with a 35-years-old man simply because I had nowhere else to go. I had to share a…a flat with him, and in the process he took advantage of me. And if I didn’t know somebody else who then opened up their home to me, I probably would have still remained in that situation. And a lot of women are still going through that. They’re still being taken advantage of. They’re still being made to do things that they don’t necessarily want to do. But they have to live through it. Especially women who have been trafficked for sexual reasons. Or women who flee their home just to find a better place and they still can’t find a better place and they’re being taken advantage of in their places of work and it happens in every shape or form to people who are flee from a conflict or who are in a conflict.

For me personally, I picked out the story of Cassandra and Helen. These were women in the times where they didn’t have a say. Nobody cared about how they felt. Nobody wanted to know how they felt. They were just made to do things. I mean Helen specifically was taken away from her home, and it was against her will and she was made to be with this man who she never really wanted to be with. She had no say in that. But despite the circumstances she found herself in, if you didn’t know the story you wouldn’t see past her beauty. Because she had that up-front beauty, and some of the pictures that I see always dressed up nicely, looking ravishing. I don’t think people would really guess that she
had gone through the ordeal of things that she went through. So unless you kind of dig in or speak to the person, you wouldn’t know what people are going through.

Sometimes people come up with this up-front face, that everything is fine. We put on a mask, I think. Individuals, we have various masks. A happy mask, a cheerful mask... For me, I’ve gone through a lot in my lifetime. That people see me, they probably don’t never imagine the things that as an individual that I’m going through. I always come out to be confident. I know what I’m doing. I know where I’m heading. And I remember some time last year a friend who I’ve known for over ten years, she happened to witness me cry. And she goes ‘Wow, I’ve never seen you cry. I didn’t even know you cried.’ And, um, that really broke my heart because it was difficult for me to express emotions. And now it’s more easier for me to express emotions because I’ve been going through a lot of healing process. I’ve met genuine people - organisations who really had my best interests at heart and wanted to help. So I’ve received a lot of help the past couple of years. That I can actually breathe. And feel at peace with myself despite the things I’ve been through in the past.
Please do not remove from the exhibition