

The Photo Album in my Head

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Year 10

“My entry is a poem, which is loosely based around the *Contagion Cabaret*, with an especial focus on the words of Dr Emilie Taylor-Pirie: fake news, placing blame and how we respond to coping with diseases. My intention was to portray the public's hope to return to 'normal' whilst also considering the way people are managing anxiety, worry about the future and, particularly in my poem, loss. As the *Contagion Cabaret* highlighted, the pandemic made many feel lonely and helpless; unsure of how to help their loved ones. I hoped to show that once things become more as they used to, that it is important to spend time with family and friends, even whilst feeling hopeless and mourning for those that died during the coronavirus.”

How do we store our memories?
On shelves and categorised?
Recorded snippets of conversations
Held in the files of our minds

When those in the memories passed
Did you eavesdrop on these tapes?
Replaying places and names and faces
Using the past to escape

The future seems so daunting
And the present is so still
Does hearing what we once said long ago
Replace what we never will?

So when you talk of normal
And the days after our plague
Take advantage of recording new tapes
For the ones we couldn't save