



Home from Home

The smell of school dinners, the harsh sounds reverberating around the bare corridors, the chaos and raw playful aggression of boys enjoying their midday break. I am turning the corner moving away from the din, through a door and into a small cobbled courtyard – an anomaly in itself in a 1960's built school.

Thirty -five years on, I am acutely aware of my inner thoughts and feelings – I can almost hear my own breathing. Full of a quite excitement at arriving, I open the door to the workshop – I am there. A few boys are working at benches; the teacher focusing on his latest project moving purposefully along the front of the workshop. I go to the cupboard and pull out the piece of copper sheet I had been working on only a short while ago during the morning lesson.

I select a raising hammer and stake, test the softness of the pickled, pink metal and begin the next stage of systematically raising it from a flat disk to a conical bowl. I pause. The sound of fire and air from the braising hearth, the smell of oil from the lathe, the low murmur of voices from students creating, deciding, learning, making – such a contrast to life on the other side of the door. I am home.