



## 'In My Room' book reviews .....Andrew Relph writes...

"This is a book about survival. It tells of an unusually brave journey, yet one that many people will find somehow familiar, and therefore deeply consoling. The recognition and encouragement of the self behind the shape that circumstances have pushed and pulled us into, is every person's task. It is also the task of all serious psychotherapy. Janine's writing has been her psychotherapy.

It's what helped 'her see'. And when experience 'is on the page' it becomes more manageable and seems to hold more choices.

Society often pushes each of us towards a jelly like adaption to what others want us to be. This allows us less chance of feeling our own sense of who we are - which is not the same as selfishness.

But do we all need to write out our experiences on to the page to make sense of the self? Perhaps we do if, like Janine, we start where there is no sense, no existence; mere survival in the dark.

Yet relating to ourselves on the page is a lot like relating to another person who can hear us; although this takes trust again after it is first taken away.

There is a chance that this account of this rescued self will be more than consoling to the reader; perhaps in these lines the reader may develop resolution of their own.

This is because Janine has concentrated on her experience, which is deep and rich; scary and painful; not on its classification which would be flat and without meaning.

This is one difference between the poet and the self help book, which this is not. Two other qualities of the writing mark this out as poetry.

There are lines which will take the top of your head off and yet there are spaces for you to rest and find your self.

There is no advice here; advice often demeans. Instead there is the constant valuing of all experiences, experiences which society often seems to discard.

I've always thought 'growing up' is over-rated pushing us as it does into the next challenge but Janine has found a way of going back and picking up valuable bits of the self that have been left behind. It's brave to do this because the bits of the self are often painful and hide behind angry and frightened feelings.

It's also brave because it leaves us taking full responsibility for ourselves. That's hard maybe, but nothing could be more liberating."



## EV (18) writes...

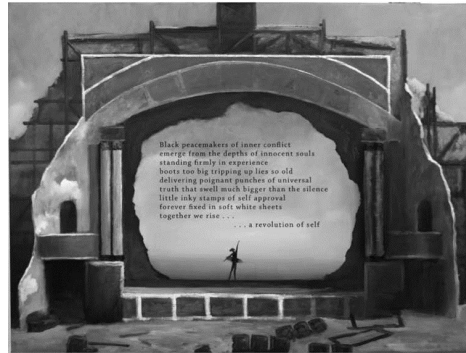
In My Room leads us on a journey of self exploration and a telling of truths.

Through Janine's own experiences we can see our own - in this, clarity is created. So many of us struggle with demons from our own past, questioning ourselves when the answers lay elsewhere. By writing her experiences and truths on a number of issues she has allowed us to seek the answers we need - learn from the ones she has already found.

Unlike so many 'self help' type books that dredge up unspeakable memories and when you've finished the book, leave you to deal with them with the only self destructive methods you have, it lays to rest each issue it brings up - creating safety within its pages. Her story has not been forced into any particular form but emerges in whatever form it wishes to take.

Amazing poetry, images and narrative are morphed together giving the story a soul. Hard truths are shouted, pictures exist in pictures if you can find them.

The path is not always easy but there are plenty of places to rest along the way. Cool lagoons for the senses. There is entertainment and information to be had, but secrets will reveal themselves to you if you only look. A seriously great read!"



Black precursors of inner conflict  
 emerge from the depths of innocent souls  
 standing firmly in experience  
 boxes too big ripping up lines so old  
 delivering poignant punches of universal  
 truth that smell much bigger than the silence  
 little ink stamps of self approval  
 forever faded in soft white sheets  
 together we rise . . . a revolution of self

H o l d o n

I held a young soul suffering  
 And my Achilles heel I saved  
 I hugged a breaking heart  
 And it punched right through my chest  
 I held a breath of deep despair  
 And shared a lifeless void  
 Surrendered to a stolen moment  
 And entered a sacred place  
 I allowed words to pierce my guard  
 And a trembling hand met mine  
 I shed a tear as pain took hold  
 And it softened another's fall  
 We sat with silence, moved with fear  
 And together we returned  
 We captured moments of relief  
 And I held the hand of hope.

I dedicate this poem, this book, to those special people who  
 have shared with me their stories and pain, and in doing so,  
 initiated an intense period of self-examination through a  
 complete re-write of this book . . . to discover that ultimately  
 it is truth that sets us free . . . and to have the courage to  
 tell it . . .

## Others write ...

"I look at little bits every night and find new meanings I haven't seen before - it also sits in the prime position on my bed side table, and it's even more special now that I have your autograph in it! *Kelly*

"I ordered your book and have not been able to put it down. It is such a fantastic and important read . . . absolute brilliance!" *Jo*

"Keep picking up the book and re reading bits that I so relate to! You will be happy to know that your book is now part of the Wauchope Vietnam Veterans Library where it is 'in our room' and will be well read by all... you can be sure of that." *'G' Vietnam veteran*

"It's open and honest, thought provoking and very empowering. Something for everyone." *Trish*

"The artwork and presentation of the book is absolutely beautiful. 'In My Room' is a remarkable and outstanding achievement. I will treasure your book forever." *Karen*

"I am stunned and in wonderment! As I read - the words became my own. The pictures, the concepts and the piece of your heart that blend into the words is lovely and touching and... thank you." *Helen*

**Julie McCormack, Clinical Psychologist, Princess Margaret Hospital for Children writes...**

"In My Room offers the reader a number of possibilities for engagement. Captivating images distil the essence of life's essential moments.

**A closer analysis traces a journey through darkness and reflection, to a place of home.**

For the sufferer of trauma and mental illness, and those close to them, In My Room offers new hope and understanding tracing the history of the pain, and juxtaposing the even more challenging steps of taking responsibility and moving forwards."