

Dear Association of Basque children of 37,

Since I visited Manchester People's History Museum and I discovered your history of the Basque children refugees I have been working with your archive materials to recreate your memories and share them in a contemporary art context. I am also a Basque child, but from some decades after this historical episode. And even if I am not directly related to this history, I feel it is close to me. I have been studying a Masters in Fine Art in Manchester and discovering the existence of this history while I have been living abroad is something that has touched me and I wanted to research these stories your perspective and bring them back into a Basque context.

Your traces have been my material of recreation, allowing to once again bring to the table an example of our humanitarian problems in today's world. *The Kindness of Strangers* is the title of this Project and focuses on the images of the Basque children arriving into the camps and that temporary situation which in turn becomes a permanent home. I have used different printmaking techniques to work with these images; on the one hand, by playing with the absence and presence of ink there is a reflexion about the erased and the written, the remembered and the forgotten. And on the other hand, there is also an attempt to make these images universal and go beyond a specific time or geographical place because this is a problem happening today as it has throughout all of history.

During the summer I was chosen to exhibit this project in Castlefield Gallery (Manchester), and I had the pleasure of meeting Simon Martinez with his lovely daughter. I wanted to thank him specially for coming to the exhibition and for all the support I have received since mentioning this project to him.

I have also met several people who knew about your history or that were connected in a way to it and sharing all these memories was really touching.

*The kindness of strangers* has been awarded the prize of Young contemporary creation in Sain Jean Pied de Port (France) and I wanted to share my happiness with you because I want to keep sharing your history. I am ready to start new projects, that is why I feel the necessity to write this letter and say Thank you, eskerrik asko, gracias for the existence of this Association which serves to remember the past and can still inspire me today.



Maite Pinto