

When asked to write something on this topic, my initial sweep of the internet suggested the phrase “Legacy of Love” is centred around loss, and more specifically, the loss of a woman, be that as a mother, daughter, sister or other. I found this a very limiting perspective, so, happily rejecting Google’s offering of “poems for the loss of loved ones”, I chose to look for and soon found inspiration within my own personal and professional sphere.

As a journalist, I love interviewing creatives. To hear their stories, how they see the world through their unique lens, inspires my own creativity. I am fortunate to be surrounded by many talented and imaginative individuals and thankfully, because of my work and generous friends, my network continues to grow. Yesterday, a dear friend gave me my belated Christmas present: a book, an artwork: *Everybody’s Story* by Ellen Downes. It includes photographs of 30 women’s naked torsos presented as beautiful golden casts. We are gifted with an abundance of life experiences including loss, ill-health, trauma, abuse, motherhood, resilience, determination and self-compassion. Ellen’s images include women of all ages and presents a diverse range of sexual orientation, gender identity and experience. She invited these brave women to share their stories and captured, through her art, what it means from their different perspectives to live in a woman’s body.

It was a poignant moment when I received the book. I’d been thinking of what to write on the theme for nearly 3 weeks and at that moment it became powerfully clear. Here was a *Legacy of Love*, I was holding it in my hand, a tangible object that represented everything this theme means for me. The book provides a safe, nurturing space for these women to present their vulnerabilities. It shows us the power of self-love and the lifelong work this requires. It is a celebration of unity, our legacy as a collective, a tribe, the unspoken bond between women and the joy, pain, suffering we all experience over our lifetimes. So, I am glad I veered from my initial googling, and I am grateful to my friends for continually inspiring me. For that, and so much more, I love them and I am confident that is a legacy in itself.

“Love is sufficient unto love,
Love has no desire but to fulfil its
itself.” Kahlil Gibran

Thank you, Robyn,
for my Christmas Present
Thank you, Ellen,
for your powerful work
Thank you to the 30 women who shared
their stories in *Everybody’s Story*
Thank you, Georgia Rose,
for introducing me to Kahlil Gibran
and his beautiful works and perspective
on Love
And thank you, Iona, for allowing me
the space to reflect and appreciate what
this theme means to me