

The Pomegranate Monologues

GET CREATIVE

Respond to art through storytelling

Be featured on our platform for the **K+C Festival**

HUNDRED
HEROINES⁺
♀

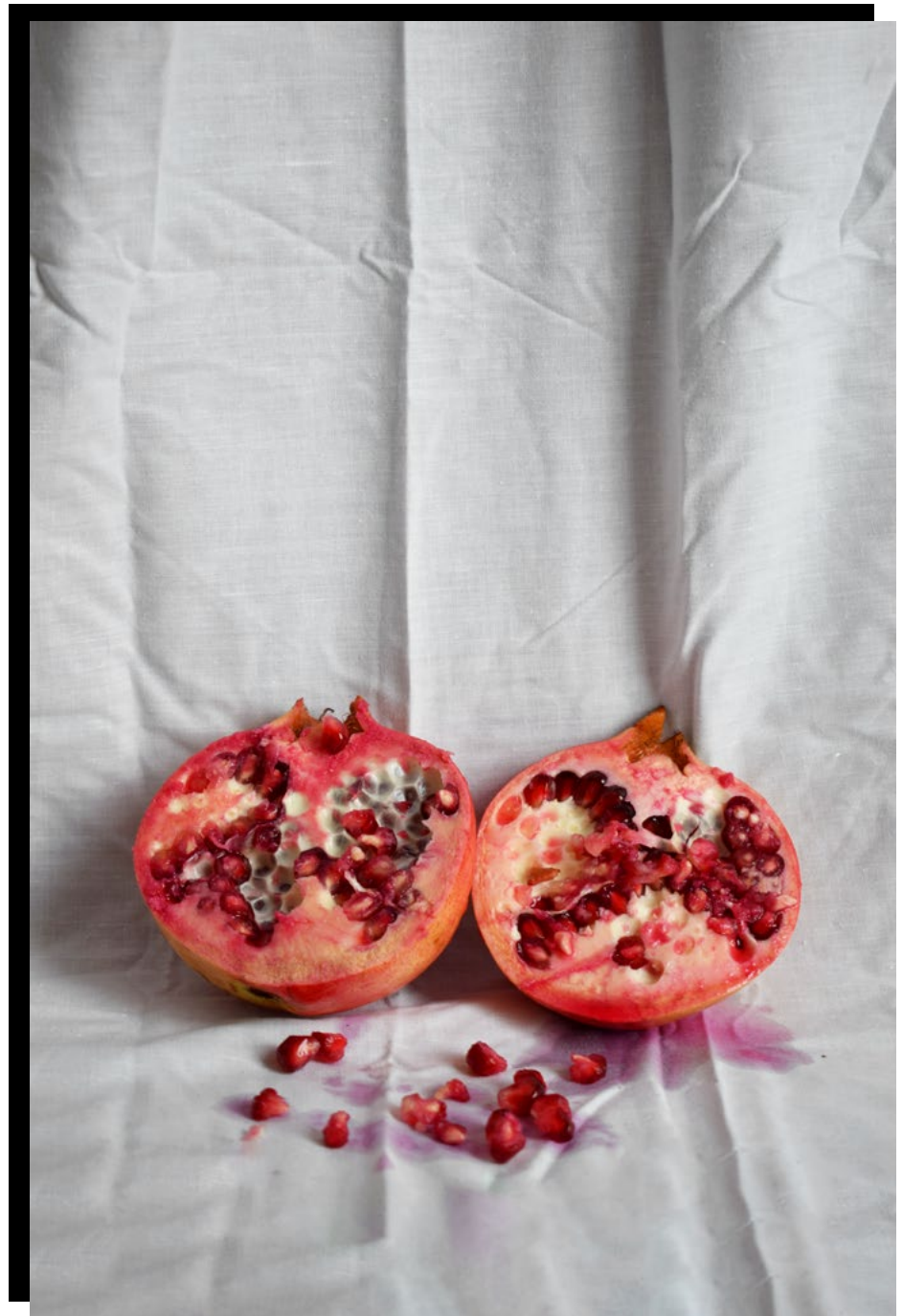


Image © Charlotte Harrop

The Pomegranate

A native fruit of Iran, Afghanistan, North Caucasus, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Transcaucasia, Turkey and Turkmenistan, the pomegranate is known as the **crown jewel of the fruit world**. Apart from being a superfruit with impressive medicinal and nutritional qualities - add to that

its antioxidant properties, which make its use in skincare products more than just about its sweet fragrance - it has also been celebrated by different civilisations and cultures around the world for centuries through art, spiritual traditions and myths.

Persephone & Hades

These photographs inspire us to go back to an ancient Greek myth featuring **Persephone**, the daughter of Zeus and Demeter. In it, she is abducted by Hades to become the Queen of the Underworld beside him.

On hearing of her daughter's kidnapping, Demeter falls into a deep depression. Unable to work, she stops articulating her goddess gifts (of agriculture and fertility). And everything stops growing.

When Zeus recognises her pain, he sends Hermes to the Underworld to deliver a message of liberation for Persephone and demands her immediate release. Her freedom, however, is complicated by the fact that she has eaten a handful of seeds from a pomegranate fruit. According to the expectations of her day, Persephone should not be allowed to leave her captor, having eaten from him. But how can the earth survive if nothing grows? A compromise must be reached.

Zeus, god of all gods, and Hades, his brother and god of the Underworld, agree for Persephone to live in the Underworld for 6 months a year (during the seasons recognised in the west as autumn and winter) and return to the earth for 6 months - when spring blooms and summer yields.



Image © Ellie Mcdonough



Image © Charlotte Harrop

Look at these photographs

There is something about the tumbled seeds and spilt juice in the image on the left which suggests loss, maybe pain. Conversely, we might perhaps sense a breaking loose: freedom, an escape, a naturalness. And in the image above, the way the pomegranate is cupped tenderly indicates a gentle offering or a contemplation.

When read closely, these images chime with the Greek myth and Persephone's encounter with the pomegranate.

Both artists make the fruit

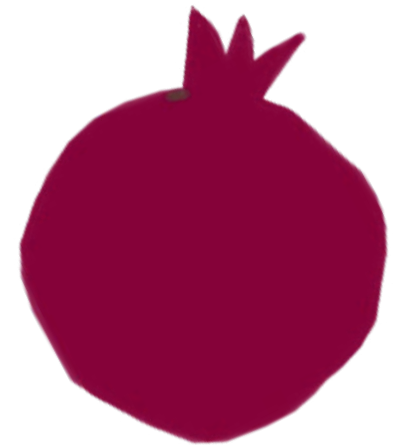
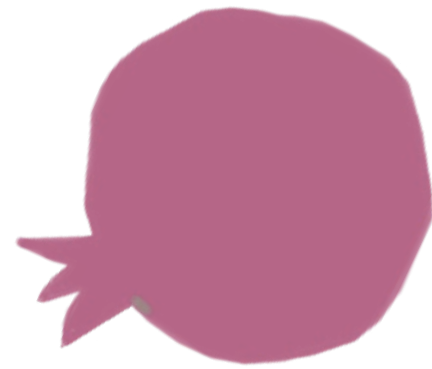
the focal point and the subject.

So, what's their voice?

Why don't we celebrate the **pomegranate** with a monologue?

As an artistic homage to this year being the International Year of Fruits and Vegetables, we decided to put the fruit centre stage and imagine how the pomegranate might have felt in this myth.

We thought, what better way to express this than through a monologue? Ours turned out in picture book form...

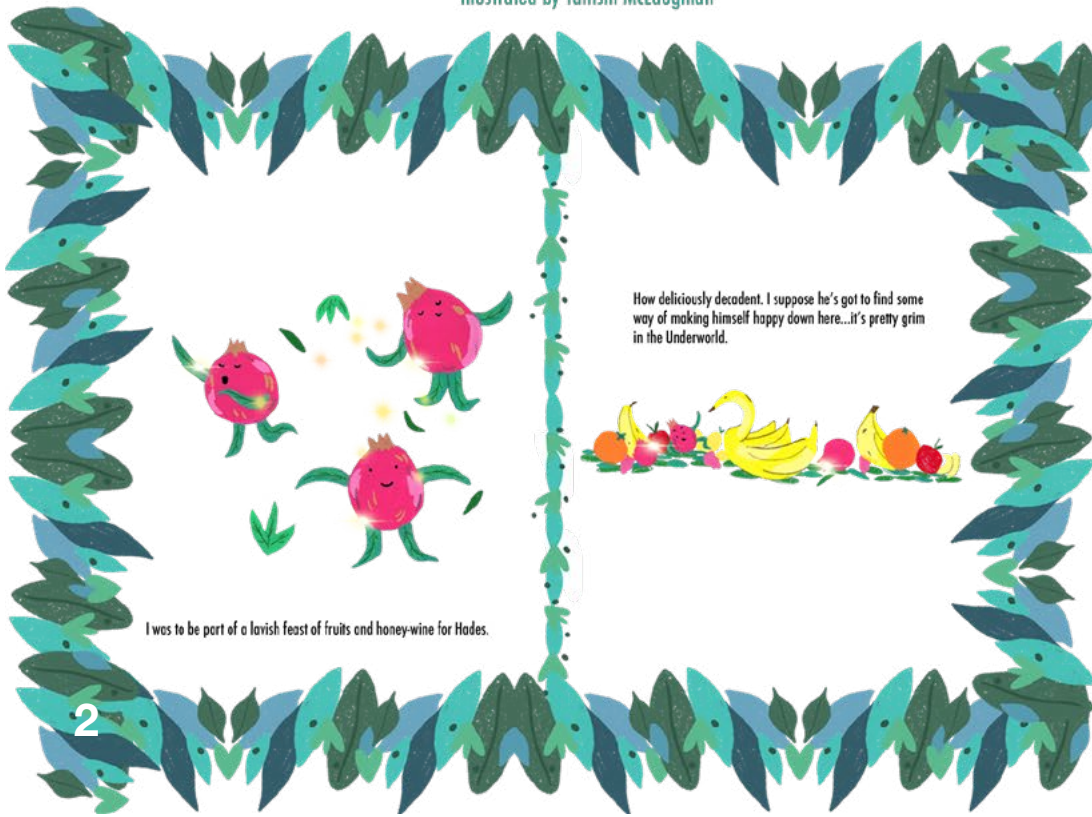


The Pomegranate Seeds

(and Persephone). A monologue.



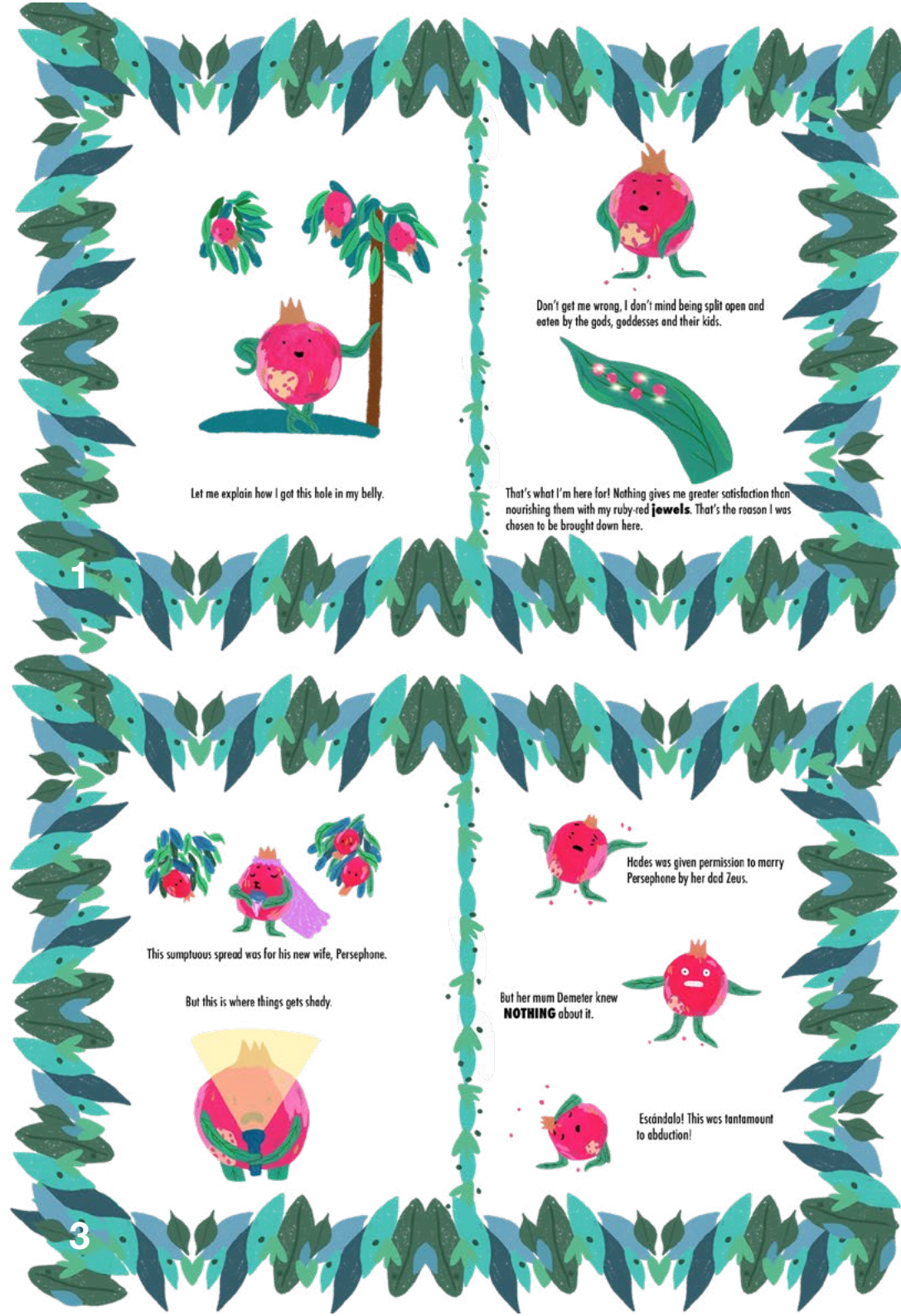
Written by Vanessa Ansa
Illustrated by Tamsin McLaughlan



How deliciously decadent. I suppose he's got to find some way of making himself happy down here...it's pretty grim in the Underworld.

I was to be part of a lavish feast of fruits and honey-wine for Hades.

2



Let me explain how I got this hole in my belly.

Don't get me wrong, I don't mind being split open and eaten by the gods, goddesses and their kids.

That's what I'm here for! Nothing gives me greater satisfaction than nourishing them with my ruby-red **jewels**. That's the reason I was chosen to be brought down here.



This sumptuous spread was for his new wife, Persephone.

But this is where things gets shady.



Hades was given permission to marry Persephone by her dad Zeus.

But her mum Demeter knew **NOTHING** about it.



Escándalo! This was tantamount to abduction!

3



When Demeter found out, she was **NOT** happy! Anyway, she persuaded Persephone's dad to send Hermes.



more importantly, this is where yours truly takes centre stage.



This is where the plot thickens...



That preamble is always such a drag.

4



Look, all I know is how much she enjoyed every single one of my seeds. I'm surprised she didn't come back for more.

We can fast forward...



blah blah blah!...

Then an agreement was made between Hades and Demeter that Persephone would return to earth for **six** months each year and come back to the Underworld for the other **six**.



The story gets boring after this.



6



So, of course, **EVERYBODY** knows that if you eat food from your captor, you can never be released.



When she thought nobody was looking, she stealthily plucked **six** of my firm, juicy seeds. Don't ask me why so few -



And you see, when Persephone laid her eyes on me, she simply couldn't resist me. I mean, can you?



maybe she was dieting; maybe she thought Hades wouldn't notice and she'd be allowed to leave; maybe she was trying to be ladylike and demur.

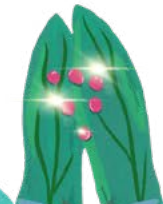
5



Clearly the central tragedy here is **NOT** that Persephone had to divide her time between earth and the Underworld.



The real **dagger** in all of our hearts is that she didn't eat the rest of my glistening **gemstones**.



7

Approach the Creative Process Broadly



We invite you to join in a **celebration of photography, fruit and cultural life** by creating a pomegranate monologue.

Decide loosely what the pomegranate wants to say. Maybe think about who they are addressing: another character in the myth, themselves or us? It doesn't have to be a picture book. Your creative options are endless...

- 1** Write a script as a playwright does, with stage directions.
- 2** Free write. Without thinking, start writing. No editing, just writing. Set a timer for 15 minutes and see what happens. Characters sometimes take on a life of their own when you just flow with whatever comes up. Then develop it.
- 3** Draw a cartoon strip (more visual, less wordy).
- 4** Like free writing, ad lib a performance. Start recording and improvise the monologue as it comes to you - on audio - or video, as if you are on stage.
- 5** Perform a dance to express the feelings of the pomegranate.
- 6** Write the song the pomegranate sings.
- 7** Collaborate - take it in turns to write pieces of the monologue in whichever form you wish.
- 8** Write or perform the monologue as a poem.
- 9** Create a short film.
- 10** Respond to it in any other creative way you feel.

If you can't decide, ask someone to say a number between 1 and 9, and do that one! Or throw some dice. Before the end of the **K+C Festival**, we'd love to feature some of your creative monologues on our site .

Submission Instructions

For terms and conditions and how to submit see our website: <https://tinyurl.com/HHPOM>

or scan the QR Code

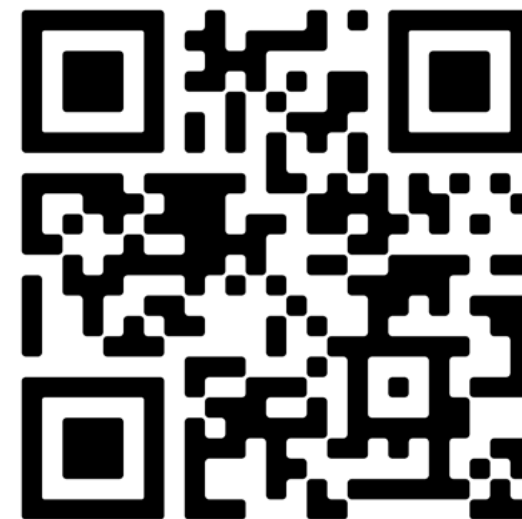


Image © Charlotte Harrop



Image © Ellie Mcdonough

Before you go, spend some time with these pomegranates. What are they telling you?

HUNDRED HEROINES

First Floor, 10 Queen Street Place, London, EC4R 1BE
Registered charity no.1190277, Company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales no.12318478
+44 (0)7831 487606 | hello@hundredheroines.org