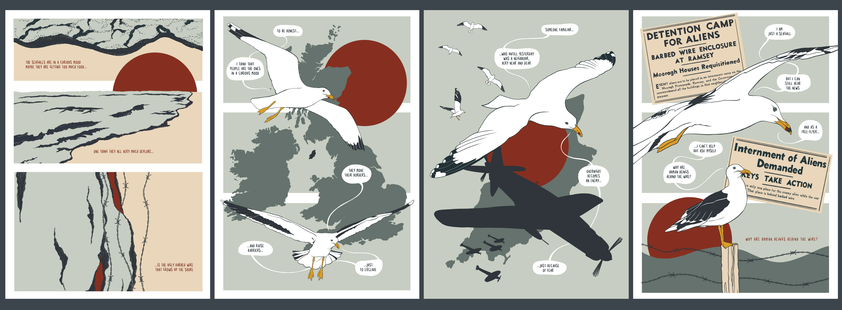
# COMICS

## by Giada Peterle

The Music, Migration and Mobility team have worked with Giada Peterle of the University of Padua, Italy, to develop a series of comic books inspired by our research.

Dr Peterle has created work that represents different aspects of the internment of civilians by the British state during the Second World War, a process in which many of the musicians focused upon by our project were caught up. Her work was inspired by both the history of internment in general and, particularly, the musical revue *What a Life!*, which was produced and performed by inmates of Central Camp in Douglas on the Isle of Man; the composer Hans Gál wrote the music for the performances. On this panel, you can see several of the works created by Dr Peterle and read her reflections on her work.

### It comes in waves




History comes in waves. Over and over, in wartime even familiar figures seem to cast unsettling shadows on the ground, and the fear of otherness takes over. Inspired by Hans Gál's *The Song of the Barbed Wire*, this comics story observes the dreadful absurdities of human behaviour during wartime from the detached perspective of a seagull. In these pages, looking at the repetitiveness of human history from above, the seagull sees the barbed wire coming back again and again along the coast as if it followed the recurring movements of the waves crashing against the shore.

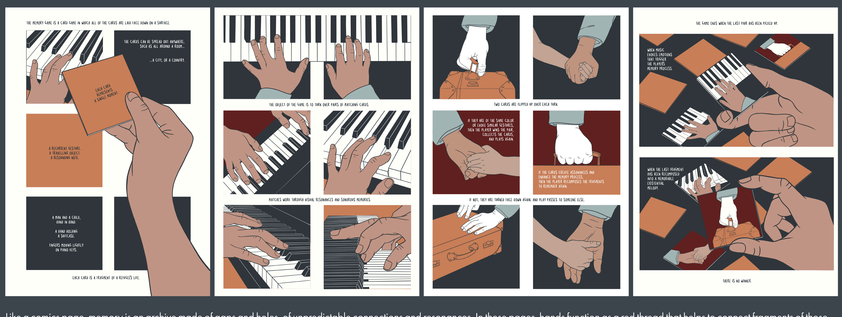
Author: Giada Peterle. *Text in left-hand panel is from the revue What a Life!*

### What a life!

The musical revue *What a Life!* and the diary *Music Behind Barbed Wire* by Hans Gál are precious textual sources which reconstruct life in British internment camps. These comics pages help us fill in some gaps in the historical sources, visualising the performances and the mobilising power of music. Music moved, at the time, when it resonated from behind the barbed wire, across the Isle of Man. It allowed internees to exit the camp, and to enter the theatre for just one night. Music moves us, today, as it reminds us of that time.

Author: Giada Peterle. *Text in brown speech bubbles is from Hans Gál's internment diary, Music Behind Barbed Wire*

### The memory game



Like a comics page, memory is an archive made of gaps and holes, of unpredictable connections and resonances. In these pages, hands function as a red thread that helps to connect fragments of those everyday lives that were interrupted and deeply changed by internment. If each hand holding a suitcase is a series of broken relations, each gesture on a piano key evokes a note, resonating loudly to invoke memories of life as it was outside the camp. Each panel is a card that invites you, reader, to play this memory game and create your own associations and meanings.

Author: Giada Peterle