

Human Rights Defenders

Poetry Challenge



Defenders of rights

Defenders of a better world



Preface

Dear readers,

The Human Rights Defenders Poetry Challenge was organised to celebrate artists and activists around the world who continued to address key issues faced by human rights defenders and their communities even through extreme challenging conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic. When the rest of the world came to a halt, human rights defenders kept moving, acted in solidarity of people and communities who were under threat as they protected and fought for their rights. To show our solidarity and support, this poetry challenge was one of the ways we continued to #StayWithDefenders. It is important for Protection International together with our partners from ProtectDefenders.eu and from The University of York to celebrate artists and activists who use poetry as a way to expose injustices, express resistance, speak truth to power, inspire hope, and fight for transformational social change.

Social change in itself is a living form of art. It constantly shifts. It evolves with each new generation giving birth to a plethora of vibrant ideas, capturing key issues and problems, drawing solutions and alternatives....expressing them through art. Using art as a form of expression to challenge prevalent systemic problems that continue to undermine and disempower human rights defenders is a powerful tool. Artists around the world are expressing their deep thoughts when it comes to fighting injustices and performing acts of resistance. Poetry has become a uniting force between art and social change. Therefore, it only makes sense to celebrate human rights defenders (HRDs) and uplift the voices of HRDs through art, and in this case, through poetry. By the power of our words and the significance of our actions, the human rights movement has continued to grow over the years.

Within this book of poems, you will get to know the stories of 32 artists from 20 different countries, who continue to contribute to this movement towards greater peace, equality and justice for all. This initiative has been an impressive collaborative effort between our three organisations, and after many months of hard work we are very pleased to present this book of poems.

We would like to thank all those who have contributed to making this such a success, with special thanks to all the HRDs who submitted poems and shared their stories with us. We hear you, we stand with you and we support you. We stay with defenders.



Mae Ocampo

Executive Director

Protection International

Poetry Booklet

Credits

Acknowledgments

We would like to express our thanks for all those that submitted poems to this poetry challenge. In particular, we would like to thank all those that made this initiative possible:

To all Protection International staff who contributed to making this collection of poems possible. In particular, to those who played a key role in making this project a success: Anastasia Oiro, Carla Miranda, Carolina Garzón, Chelsy Gomez, Emily Humphreys, Iria Castro, Jehoshaphat Sagero, Kanchana Di-ut, Marjorie Unal, Marta Peiro, Mae Ocampo, Mauricio Angel, Mercy Chepnge'noh, Sam Maina, Susana Hernández Torres.

To our expert judges who supported the scoring of poems in the various languages:

English poems: Henry Raby
French poems:Thalie Envolée
Portuguese poems: Maria Amália Souza
Spanish poems: Rosa Chávez
Swahili poems: Guillaume Bisimwa
Thai poems: Ida Aroonwong

To our professional poetry translators, with a special thanks to Frederic for his generosity and solidarity with the human rights movement:

French to English translation by: Frederic Audebrand
Portuguese to English translation by: Alda Luiza de Lima Ferreira
Spanish to English translation by: Lisbet Gabriela Ramirez-Chavez
Swahili to English translation by: Angelica Mulokozi Christin
Thai to English translation by: Peera Songkunnatham

With the Support of:

SIDA and Open Society Foundations

The HRDs Poetry Challenge was elaborated by:

Meredith Veit and Tommaso Ripani, Pippa Cooper, Javier Roura Blanco and Marie Le Henaff.

Graphic design, layout, artwork, animation and illustrations by:

Aitor Garcia



Introductory Letter

“Poetry is not a luxury. It is a vital necessity of our existence.”

-- Audre Lorde

Launched in 2021, the Human Rights Defenders Poetry Challenge is meant to honour those who have steadfastly continued their work, even amidst repressive and incredibly unpredictable circumstances. We purposefully opened up our call for poems in six different languages –English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Swahili and Thai– so that more human rights defenders (HRDs) would have the ability to express themselves and communicate to the international community in their own language and voice.

We received a total of 438 poems coming from artists and activists representing over 58 countries around the world –from Cameroon to Cuba, from Ecuador to Eswatini, from Peru to the Philippines–. We were so impressed by the talent, creativity and bravery of all those who sent us submissions. It is not always easy to present your artwork to others, especially when it touches on such personal and pressing matters.

After multiple rounds of review, including scoring from our external expert poetry judges, the top 5 poems in each language were chosen for publishing and professional poetry translation. These top 30 poems, with a few extra pieces from our expert judges, constitute the following pages of this book.

With the help of many people from our respective organisations, we put a great deal of effort and care into bringing you a collection of poems that highlights a diversity of perspectives from HRDs around the world. Within these pages, you will hear from HRDs who are working with youth, environmental HRDs, HRDs living with disabilities, HRDs who are teachers, women HRDs and HRDs who were formerly incarcerated. They each have important stories to tell, and these poems are a only peak into the impactful work that they do.

Art not only helps us to interpret the world around us, but it also provides us with a creative outlet for self-reflection. Poetry, in particular, offers us a way to empathise and make connections with one another on a deeper level. Through poems, we can pay homage and speak to the defenders who came before us, we can more creatively address the injustices of today and reimagine what we want our societies to look like tomorrow. As poet, feminist and activist Audre Lorde has explained: “Poetry is not only dream and vision; it is the skeleton architecture of our lives. It lays the foundations for a future of change, a bridge across our fears of what has never been before.”

When reading this collection of poems, and hearing the voices of the authors, we hope that you feel connected to these defenders and their work. We encourage you to think about your role in the human rights movement, and the importance of the right to defend human rights for achieving social change. And, of course, we hope you enjoy their amazing poems!

Sincerely,



Pippa Cooper
The University of York



Meredith Veit
Protection International



Javier Roura Blanco
ProtectDefenders.eu

In honour of human rights defenders around the world.



Past, present and future.



Creative commons

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Judges



Maria Amalia Souza
BRAZIL

Maria Amalia Souza is the founder and director of strategic development for Fundo Casa Socioambiental in Brazil. With over 35 years of experience, she is specialized in designing strategies that assure philanthropic resources reach the most excluded grassroots social and environmental justice groups working in the Global South. She is part of the Human Rights Funders Network Steering Committee and co-founder of the Brazil Philanthropy Network for Social Justice. Amalia has mentored seven new Global South national funds and regularly writes articles and blogs for specialized philanthropic publications as Alliance Magazine, WINGS Worldwide Initiative for Grantmakers Support, among others.



Rosa Chávez
GUATEMALA

Rosa Chávez is a poet, artist and educator of Maya K'iche' Kaqchiquel origin. She has published the poems Casa Solitaria, Piedra Abaj', El corazón de la piedra, Quitapenas, AWAS Secretos para Cura, and Fanzine Abya Yala. She has also ventured into theater, performance, video and sound experimentation projects. She is currently coordinator of the Movimiento Poético Mundial WPM (WPM World Poetry Movement) in Guatemala and a member of Just Associates (JASS). Her work has been widely anthologized and translated into English, French, Norwegian, German, and Hungarian, among others.



Ida Aroonwong
THAILAND

Ida Aroonwong's career has evolved at the intersection of literature and human rights activism. She worked for a community rights non-governmental organisation (NGO) in Bangkok, while she was also working as a freelance writer, translator and editor. She now runs a publishing house and is responsible (together with university professor Chalita Budhuwong) for a public fund called Ratsadonprasong (which translates to "the will of the people") that has been set up as a means to protect the right to justice for political dissidents since the 2014 coup in Thailand.



Henry Raby
UNITED KINGDOM

Hailing from York in the United Kingdom, **Henry Raby** is a punk poet and gig promoter. His work has been described as playful, highly-charged and passionate. He has performed at music, arts and literature festivals across the UK, including Edinburgh Fringe, Deer Shed, Latitude and Boomtown Fair. Henry has been published by Burning Eye Books and co-runs the York spoken word organisation Say Owt. He co-hosts the Vandal Factory podcast on East Leeds FM, which highlights the magic moments where art and activism meet.



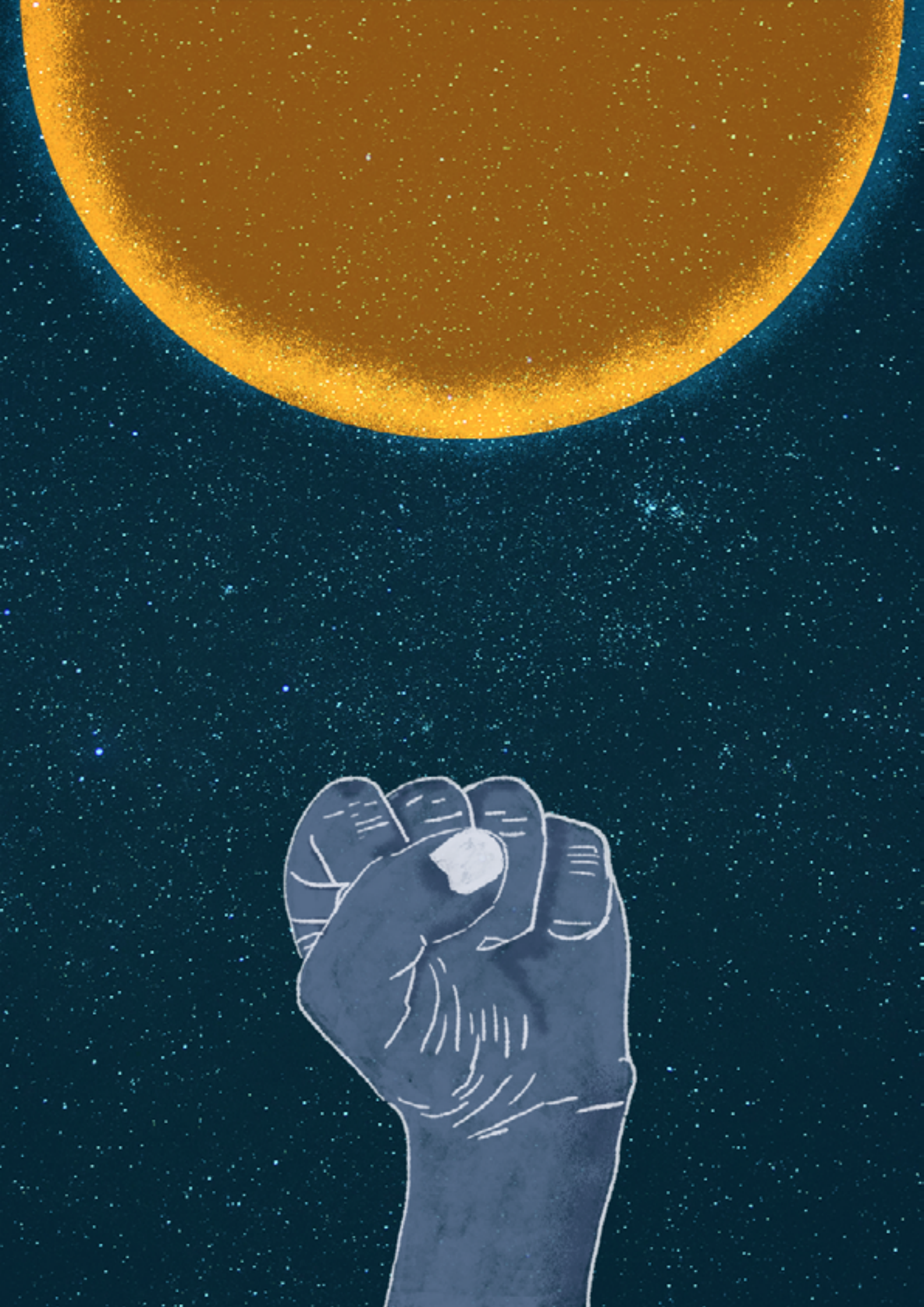
Guillaume Bisimwa
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC
OF THE CONGO

Guillaume Bisimwa is the director of the Amani Festival, a creative ecosystem that aims to promote peace, culture and peaceful cohabitation in Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo. He is also a member of the board of directors of the Foyer Culturel de Goma, a cultural centre for training, learning and discovering art, which has been bringing together several artists from Goma as well as those who live the region since 2011.



Thalie Envolee
BELGIUM

Thalie Envolee is a collective of artists who want to discover and make poetry accessible, while also demystifying it. The group records poetic texts and then distributes them widely online to anywhere in the world, keeping the celebration of poetry alive. This is a free, philanthropic project of the Artaban Company.



Awake

Yewande Akinse

(NIGERIA)

Stay with the defenders
who in heart and in deed
speak truth to power
brave hearts defying powers,
pandemic and pestilence
to be a bastion of defense
for those whom powers
seek to devour
great unsung heroes
standing up for victims
of circumstance

while the world woke up here
somewhere in between
apocalypse and the deep
somewhere neither here nor
there
in a place where men weep

we awoke
as in a dream of the night
to behold the reflection
of fate on a broken mirror
tainted visions, blood bath,
body count, plight
and a pandemic on powerful
prowl in corridor

we awoke to slumber
we awoke to hounding fear
we awoke to slain numbers
of persons most dear

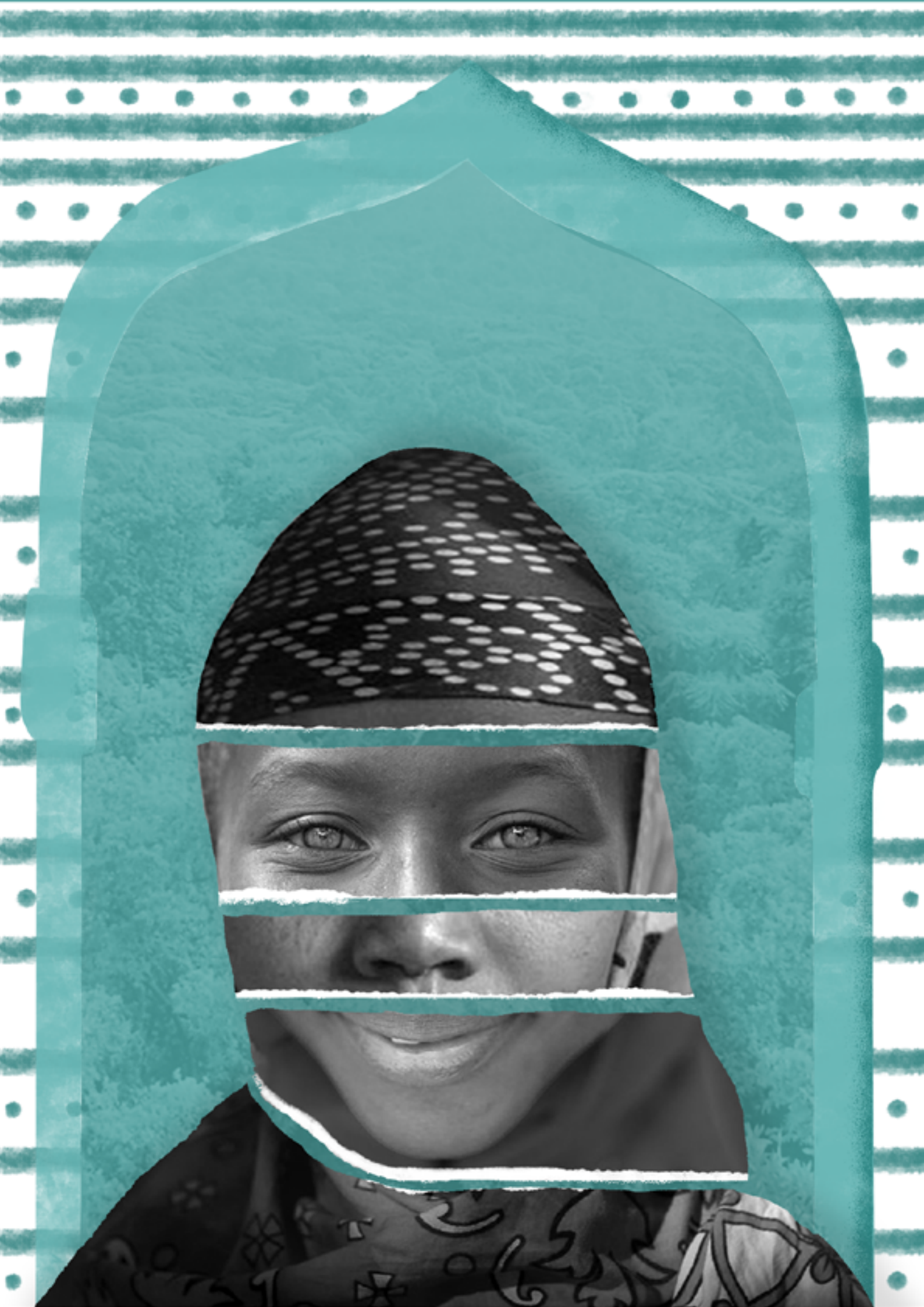
and we woke up here
somewhere in between
a nightmare,
a dream and the severe
in search of a defender
on whom to lean

we found the defender
who awakes daily
on account of good
to build up and support
without surrender
the disenfranchised,
the oppressed and
those misunderstood

the world is bearable
because they are
amidst the great unknown
amidst the new normal,
the scars and the bizarre
we awake knowing
we are not alone.

01 • Listen to the poem!





Changing the world with a smile

Salome Nduta

(KENYA)

She packed quickly,
basic items to survive what was ahead
The ahead she never knew,
the ahead she had not dreamt of
The ahead that was thrown to her
For being the wife of a defender
With love, soft speech and a face full of smile
a woman defender soldiers on

She wails, shouts and calls for help
but no one responds
She calls for help
not because she was under attack,
but because of the pain of a child
A child not hers but a child of a woman
A child who was being arrested
for exercising his freedom of speech
A child who could not speak for himself
With love, soft speech and a face full of smile
a woman defender soldiers on

She is beaten, scorned and branded
unspoken names
Her children touted by peers
and others called names
Names that are meant
to dehumanise a human being,
Names meant to shame her work and dignity
With love, soft speech and a face full of smile

a woman defender soldiers on
She fights for her existence, existence of
others and existence of mother nature
Loss of fishing grounds and livelihoods,
the woman defender in Lamu fights
Destruction of conservation sites, and
homesteads, the woman in Nairobi fights
Destruction of historical and cultural sites,
the woman in Nakuru fights
With love, soft speech and a face full of smile
a woman defender soldiers on
The woman defender has finally woken up
She now embraces
what is thrown to her with a smile
For she knows that her voice
cannot be swallowed, it is unstoppable
With peers they join hands to speak in one
voice because, with love, soft speech and
a face full of smile a woman defender will
change the world

(Dedicated to the Women human rights
defenders of the world)

02. Listen to the poem!





No Dust Will Settle in EDSA

Naro

(PHILIPPINES)

Sprain blooms in my ankle while climbing a footbridge in EDSA. Dust in my lungs
The same dust in my mother who held arms with strangers to protect the ballot.
As if the revolution happened centuries ago instead of within our lifetimes,
Yesterday's fear fades, must be replaced. My lungs learn to filter this air. Dust

Woven into each cell in a Filipino body like the silence in resilience. Imprisoned in
Industry. Trapped abo in labor, force that's meant to suppress each warm
Throat once made full with the cry and songs for justice now
Hoarse after overtimes. Over time, I could feel my mother's age after her own rage

Dies. Our backbones tired from holding ourselves upright, enough
Enough! Tama na! She cried long ago, when I was just a cell inside her womb,
Feeling the crowd's revolt with her muscles, metal in the blood of her raised fist
Eternally flowing throughout. Power. In that road, once bedrock: motherland broken by colonizers,
Nurtured by our ancestors. Mined and crushed by oppressors,
Dearly held together in an activist's rough palm. Dust gone through
Every outspoken then silenced mouth. All my mothers and the mothers I make—Rise.
Resist. Rest in protest. To believe is to outlive, that this dust takes shape of land. Yes, we can
Stand up even with no ground to walk on.

*Abo – ash

03. Listen to the poem!





Justice Today

Wietske Merison

(THE NETHERLANDS)

What's the lesson?
The take away from the oppression?
They question themselves
into their destined depression
Suppressing the anger,
cause they've got to be nice
Turn their truth to our lies
to be safe with us guys

So don't protest, no strife,
to protect their life
Just a butter knife in sight,
they got twenty-five to life
Inside, or unite
with their brothers who died
For no other reason
than standing upright

That's the reality,
of everyday, you see?
But oh it ain't got nothing
to do with you and me
We see all equally,
"all lives matter" to me
Blinded by the brightness
of our white supremacy

Forgive me for not having stood up in the past
For allowing this type of hatred to last
Racism first-class
whilst saying in salah (prayer)
That everyone is equal
in the face of Allah

We won't move, we won't sway
We did not come to play
Disapprove of the way
That you treat us like prey
But we will stay
And we will pray
Rise up to say
Justice today
Looking back,
we should have seen
it coming indeed
All the hatred, oppression,
colonial greed
Dehumanization, alienation

The pillars on which
we established our nations

Creations of the shadow
sides of our mind
Love undermined,
leaving us blind
For the needs of the human being
I call my brother
But y'all prefer to call
the stranger or other

Hospitality is our morality
Yet we expel refugees
seeking humanity
Sending them back
to see their hopes sink in the sea
A modern odyssey,
hijrah of broken dreams

Yes the struggle is real
too in our time
What's going in Israel and Palestine?
Apartheid redefined,
though recognized as a crime
Just the same old recycling
of hateful paradigms
Denied their rights like the Uyghur in China
Or the Kurds, Rohingya and Oneida
But as long as its not you and me its fine, huh
As long as there're no white lives caught up
on the line up?

No, it's not okay, so we'll stay
Right at this place, right in this space
Passing our days, praying for grace
Till you embrace the humanity in every face

- Chorus -

~~~~~  
04 • Listen to the poem! ▶



## Fearless Fish Out of Water

Asiem Sanyal

(INDIA)

The setting sun turns sea to gold  
As boats return with tales untold  
She watches them as dusk takes hold  
The men, they're back from fishing.

The nets are full of fish today  
In time for 'morrow's market day  
Her husband smiles, is heard to say  
"S'more than I could be wishing."

For dinner she lays out the food  
To get which, in the sea she stood  
For hours, gleaning what she could  
And to the table bringing

Octopus, mollusks, fishes small  
To eat at home, to eat them all  
None for tomorrow's market stall  
Unlike her husband's killing.

This, she knows, can hardly change when  
'Fishing' is solely done by men  
and 'gleaning' is beyond their ken  
Meant only for the dishing.

Though effort, same, she put in too  
To coax hidden creatures into view  
Knee-deep in water, toes turning blue  
The tip of her spear glistening.

She wants the status quo to change  
Though this idea may now seem strange  
She'll find a way, somehow arrange  
For gender gap to be shrinking.

Others agree, her female friends  
Patriarchy must now end  
A collective will help them defend  
Their rights, which have been missing.

These defenders will pave the way  
Bring changes which are here to stay  
"We're equal", they will proudly say,  
Words like beacons brandishing.

05 • Listen to the poem!





## Tengo derecho a estar aquí

**Marisa López Diz**  
(ESPAÑA)

Soy  
las manos que dan y que acarician,  
los labios que besan y que denuncian,  
los ojos que no miran hacia otro lado,  
la mejilla que no quiere más bofetadas.

Los brazos que sostienen el aire,  
el sexo que engendra la esperanza,  
el vientre que alberga la vida,  
las piernas que huyen del miedo,  
los pies que corren hacia la libertad.

Soy  
el indígena,  
la mujer,  
el negro,  
el niño,  
el inmigrante,  
el refugiado,  
la prostituta,  
el esclavo,  
el condenado,  
el rebelde,  
el perseguido,  
el exiliado...

Mi palabra es la bandera de la paz,  
las alas de la lucha y de la dignidad  
y mi corazón la tierra  
y mi corazón la tierra.

Tengo derecho a estar aquí.

## I have the right to be here

**Marisa López Diz**  
(SPAIN)

I am  
the hands that give and caress,  
the lips that kiss and denounce,  
the eyes that never look away,  
the cheek unwilling to suffer another blow.

The arms that sustain the wind,  
the sex that brings forth hope,  
the womb that shelters life,  
the legs that flee from fear,  
the feet that run toward freedom.

I am the  
indigenous  
woman  
black  
child  
refugee  
prostitute  
slave  
prisoner  
insurgent  
persecuted  
exiled...

My words are the flag of peace,  
wings of the struggle, wings of dignity.  
And my heart, the earth  
And my heart, the earth.

I have every right to be here.

06 • Listen to the poem!



# Trecientas sesenta palabras por la vida (por Berta Cáceres)

## Chaco de la Pitoreta

(HONDURAS)

Le dieron la palabra  
y su voz echó alas  
y el plumaje de eterno linaje  
brilló con fuerza.

Los ancianos y ancianas  
vieron en ella la fuerza del bastón  
y escucharon en ella  
el eco de la cordillera  
desde entonces marca el camino  
señala la ruta  
y su voz canta libertad.

No hace mucho que camina  
pero el imperio le teme a su pisada  
no hace mucho que habla  
pero su voz  
rompe la frontera.

Los ancianos le dieron el desafío  
pero ella - valiente - asumió al pueblo  
y se fue con el pueblo  
por el pueblo  
haciendo pueblo.

Y se volvió Matria  
vientre fecundo para la esperanza  
por la vida.  
Entonces la Matria parió árboles  
y pobló con ellos la cordillera  
la Matria esparció su semilla  
y la vida resucitó  
lentamente.

Desde que camina  
sus pasos son comparsas  
canciones de amor  
de tierra  
de origen  
de identidad.  
Bailan con ella los venados  
se agitan las oropéndolas  
y se regocija en su tonada  
el tigrillo en la cordillera Lenca.  
Ella peina su cabello  
y las hojas de los pinos zumban

reclaman su belleza  
el andar libre y digno de cada hilo  
de cada cana  
de cada huella del tiempo.

Las ancianas le dieron la sabiduría  
y su ojos se volvieron luz  
mechas de ocote  
alumbrando el sendero  
la oscuridad que deja  
el modernismo apabullante.

Le enseñaron las luciérnagas  
su brillo y su pispileo  
pero ella aprendió que no se apagan  
ni dejan de alumbrar  
solo dejan de hacerlo  
para ver si los otros  
y las otras  
están asumiendo su condición de luz  
su posibilidad de volar solos.

Le dieron la palabra  
y el eco la puso en el mundo.

Habla con los ríos  
zarandea en sus corrientes  
y ríe como loca  
ella sabe que el agua es vida  
y que vivir en el agua  
es permanecer eterna.  
Le dijeron que era hija de la tierra  
del maíz  
del agua  
entonces decidió ser tortilla  
barro para la tinaja  
y ríos abundantes.

Los ancianos le dieron la palabra  
y el bastón  
las ancianas le dieron la sabiduría  
su don de Matria  
y ella se asumió  
se volvió eterna.

*Three Hundred and Sixty Words in the Name of Life (for Berta Cáceres)*  
**Chaco de la Pitoreta**  
(HONDURAS)

They gave her the word  
and her voice took flight  
and that feathered, eternal lineage  
shone brightly.

The elders saw in her  
the strength of a wooden cane  
and heard in her  
the echoing mountains.  
Since that moment, she has forged a path  
cleared a way  
and her voice sings of freedom.

Since she began to march  
the colonizers have feared her footsteps  
Since she began to speak out  
her voice  
has broken down borders.

The elders presented her with the challenge  
but she—brave as she is—won over the people  
and went with the people  
alongside the people  
bringing together a people.

And she became Matria,  
hope for life  
fertile in her womb.  
Then la Matria brought forth trees  
and filled the mountain range  
la Matria scattered her seed  
and life, over time, was resurrected.

Since she began to walk  
her steps have been processions  
love songs for  
earth  
origin  
identity.

With her, the deer dance  
the oropendolas flutter  
and the tigrillo of the Lenca mountain range  
rejoices in her song.

She brushes her hair  
and the pine needles buzz.

They summon her beauty  
her freedom to walk, worthy of every strand  
every gray hair  
every trace of time.

The elder women gave her wisdom  
and her eyes turned to light  
wicks of ocote  
illuminating the path  
the darkness left  
by bewildering modernity.

The fireflies taught her  
their glow and their flickering  
and she learned they never go out  
they never stop shining  
they only pause  
to see if the others  
have assumed their condition of light  
their ability to fly alone.

They gave her the word  
and its echo brought her into the world.

She speaks with the rivers  
she tosses about in their currents  
and laughs wildly  
she knows water is life  
and to live in the water  
is to become eternal.  
They told her she was a daughter of earth  
of maíz  
of water  
so she became masa  
clay for the water jug  
and rivers overflowing.

The elders gave her the word  
and a wooden cane  
the elder women gave her their wisdom  
their blessing,  
and she became la Matria  
she became eternal.

~~~~~  
07. Listen to the poem! ▶



28 de abril

Diana Cristina Galeano Casadiego
(COLOMBIA)

Y floreció en abril aquella rosa clandestina
No hubo Covid ni policía
que frenara la alborada.
De aquella masa danzante y fiera
que bloqueaba las entradas.
Fuimos uno y fuimos todos,
con banderas y pancartas.
Salimos todos a la calle,
nadie se quedó en la casa.

Los barristas que antes se agredían,
hoy en la marcha se abrazaban
No hubo miedo, solo valentía desbordada.
Fueron tantos atropellos,
que el pueblo no aguanto más bofetadas
Resistió con valentía cada larga jornada
Desde los almuerzos en la calle
hasta el tropel en las madrugadas.

¡Claro que hubo muertos!
Desaparecidos y torturados
Ardieron los peajes, los Caís y los semáforos
Los días fueron de los valientes
y las noches de los más verracos
La Primera Línea se paró firme
“Stay with Defenders” gritaban a su paso

No hubo primavera más bella
que plantara tantas semillas en el pasto
Unas obligadas con fiereza,
a germinar indómitas en los campos
Otras acomodadas en la conciencia que
precisan seguir defendiendo a cada hermano
Fue un abril por supuesto, que floreció
Colombia tomada de las manos.

April 28

Diana Cristina Galeano Casadiego
(COLOMBIA)

*And in April, that clandestine rose flourished
Neither COVID nor police could stop the dawn
Of that wild, dancing crowd blocking the entrances
We were one and everyone, flying flags and banners
We took to the streets, no one stayed home.*

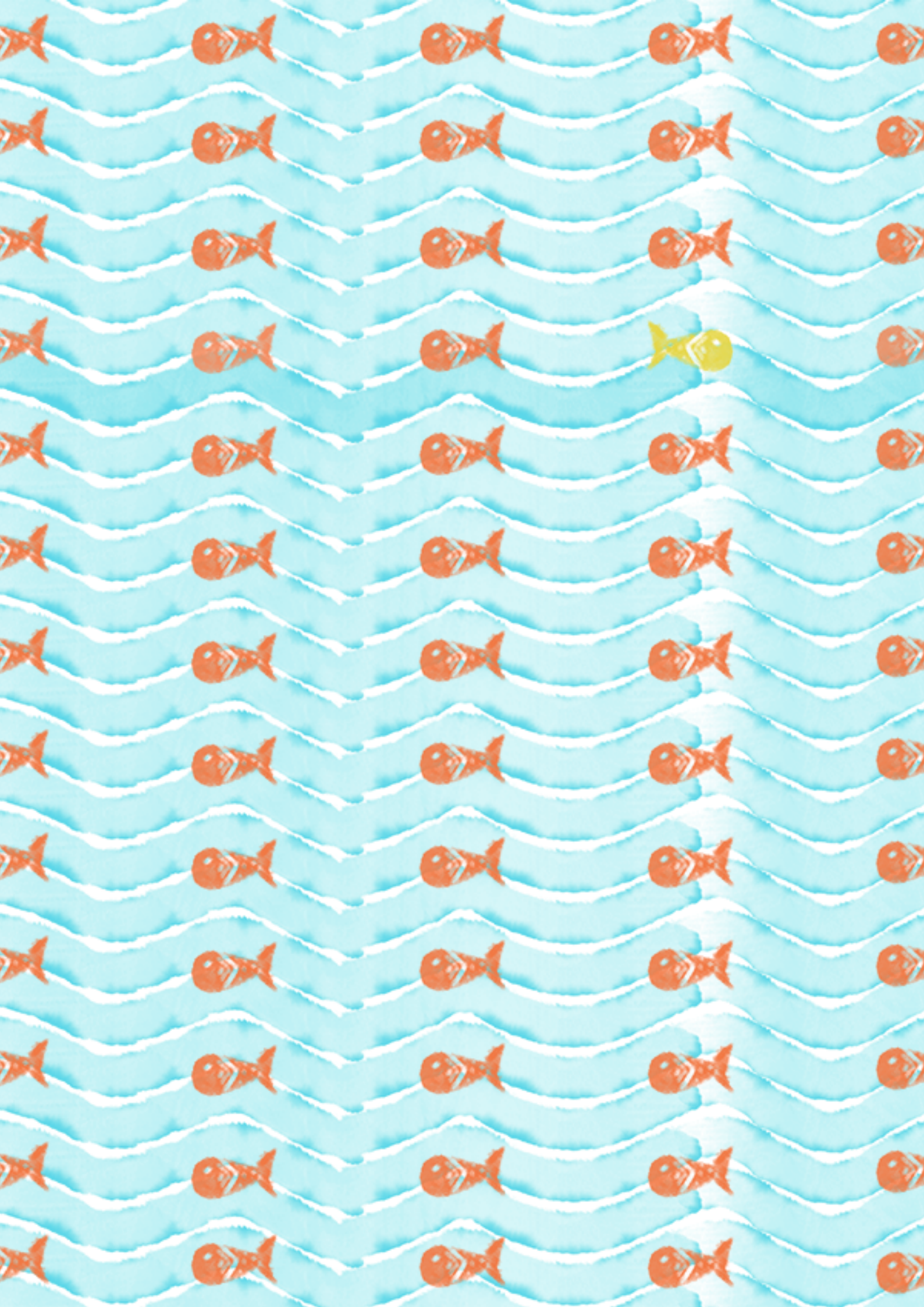
*Those who used to attack each other
embraced at today's march
There was no fear, only overflowing courage.
After so much abuse,
the people would not take another blow.
They bravely resisted every long workday
From lunch hours on the street to early morning riots.*

*People died! Disappeared and tortured.
Toll booths, police stations, and traffic lights burned
The days belonged to the brave
and the nights to the fierce
The Front Line held firm, shouting
“Stay with Defenders” as they passed.*

*There was no spring more beautiful,
planting so many seeds in the grass
Some of them forced to germinate
untamed in the fields
Others sowed in the people's consciousness t
he need to defend every brother
Of course, it was in April that Colombia flourished,
hand in hand.*

08 • Listen to the poem!





CanCIÓN

María Antonia Jiménez Estrada (MÉXICO)

Poema dedicado a Noé Vázquez Ortiz

Eres un sueño con alas de polvo estelar
acogido en la calidez de los corazones humanos,
hoy habitas entre los árboles
que te observaron por última vez
cuando recogías aromáticas flores, hierbas y frutos
de la generosa Madre Tierra,
ella te recibió y ahora te alimenta diariamente
con la verde savia de su flora.

Hay almas que emigran hacia las estrellas,
la armonía del universo las reclama
pero la tuya
evoca la vida
en la humedad de nuestras fértiles tierras.

Ahí, muy cerca de donde danzan los peces,
donde corren armadillos e iguanas,
entre las higueras,
cerca de donde los abuelos
charlan en lengua náhuatl:
bajo la protección del calor del sol
retornaste a la tierra;
defendías el humano derecho al agua de los
jubilosos ríos:
los ladrones del amor,
los hombres de humo,
los inhumanos,
los vacíos,
los sucios,
los invisibles asesinos para los gobiernos
del mundo nos arrebataron tu vida.
Y la cristalina hermana agua
a la que venerabas día a día
te ha puesto delante de nuestros ojos
en todos los lugares
donde se escucha el rítmico
pulso de la corriente de los ríos.

Te has convertido en semilla y permaneces
como infinita germinación de tus palabras.
Eres vaso de agua sobre nuestros sedientos labios
junto a las valientes
defensoras
de los ríos.

SONG

María Antonia Jiménez Estrada (MEXICO)

A poem dedicated to Noé Vázquez Ortiz

*You're a dream with wings of stardust
taking refuge in the warmth of human hearts,
today you live among the trees, your final witnesses,
they saw you picking flowers, herbs, and fruits from our
generous Mother Earth,
she welcomed you and now feeds you daily with the
green sap of her flora.*

*Some souls migrate to the stars,
called by the harmony of the universe,
but yours
summons life
from the wet earth of our fertile lands.*

*There, near the place where fish dance,
where armadillos and iguanas run,
among the fig trees,
near the elders chatting in Náhuatl:
under the sun's warm protection, you went back into
the earth;
you defended the human right to the water running in
our radiant rivers—
thieves of love,
men of smoke,
the inhumane,
the empty,
the corrupt,
the invisible assassins hired by governments
of the world,
they took your life from us.
And that crystalline sister water you revered
day by day
has put you before our eyes
everywhere
the rhythmic streams of river water resound.*

*You have become a seed and live on
in the infinite germination of your words.
You are a glass of water on our thirsty lips
united with the brave women
defending
our rivers.*

09 • Listen to the poem!





A quienes les temen los molinos

María del Campo
(URUGUAY)

A quienes paren cada mañana un día mejor.
A quienes desafían la grieta y amenazan el muro
siendo puente, ladrillo, escalón, puerta.
A quienes osan cambiar el foco, la perspectiva,
la dirección.
A quienes gritan por voz ajena
desoyendo el mudo eco de la indiferencia.
A quienes sienten que uno es todos
y que todos somos uno.
A quienes saben que este sitio no nos
pertenece
y bregan por devolverle a este mundo a todos.
A quienes honran la capacidad de hacer
y engrandecen al ser humano y el ser humano.
A quienes van de la mano con aquellos
que parecen destinados a ver espaldas.
A quienes besan ojos de hambre y arropan
pies abandonados.
A quienes reparan vidas desvencijadas y sacan
sonrisas agujereadas.
A quienes pasan noches sin sueño por quienes
perdieron sus sueños.
A quienes se desdoblán por los quebrados
y retan el statu quo para que tenga revancha
el derrotado.
A quienes rescatan esperanzas y expanden el
sentido.
A quienes experimentan que I+I+I es red,
y que la red es poderosa.
A quienes se empecinan contra las lanzas
cotidianas,
regresan para emparchar sus heridas
y salen de vuelta a la intemperie.
A quienes les temen los molinos.
A ellos imploramos con urgencia ardiente:
Abundan los Sanchos, que no abduquen los
Quijotes.

To Those Afraid of Windmills

María del Campo
(URUGUAY)

To those who every morning
give birth to a better day.
To those who slip through the cracks
and pose a threat to the wall
as bridge, brick, step, door.
Who dare to change the focus,
perspective, direction.
Who speak out for the silenced
ignoring the mute echo of indifference.
Who feel that one is everyone
and that we are all one.
Who understand this place does not belong to us
and who fight to make this world all of ours.
Who value the ability to take action
and honor human beings and being human.
To those who take the hand of people always
seeming to
get the cold shoulder.
Who kiss eyes of hunger
and dress abandoned feet.
Who mend shattered lives
and draw out worn-down smiles.
Who lose sleep over those who've lost their
dreams.
Who open themselves for the broken
and challenge the status quo, allowing those
beaten down another chance.
To those who rescue hopes and expand meaning.
Who experience I+I+I as a network, and know
its power.
Who are stubborn against the daily blows,
Who return to patch up their wounds,
and go back out into the open air.
To all those afraid of windmills.
We beg you with fierce urgency:
Sanchos abound, don't let the Quixotes give in.

10. Listen to the poem!





Je n'ai plus le droit
d'être un homme
(dans l'hiver allemand
de 1943)

Gabrielle Favre
(FRANCE)

Je fus entre tes mains le rongeur qui dénoue
Les liens de ta nation soudain certaine, ignée,
De n'aimer en son sein que les ombres
choyées.

Qui étais-je pour toi qu'un grand pantin de
boue?

Je fus entre tes mains l'œuvre du peintre fou
Qui croit jouir des couleurs d'un soir
d'éternité,

Mais éventre tantôt la mère humanité.
Qui serai-je pour toi qu'un grand pantin
debout?

Je fus un jour d'hiver les cendres de ton feu,
Je fus ce matin-là les poids des malheureux,
Je fus au soir mourant les maux des pauvres
bons,

Je fus à la nuit grise un numéro, pendu,
Je fus à l'engrenage une pièce, perdue,
L'homme sans cœur, l'homme sans droits,
l'homme sans nom.

I am no longer allowed to
be a man (in the German
winter of 1943)

Gabrielle Favre
(FRANCE)

I was in your hands the rodent that unravels
The bonds of your nation suddenly certain,
igneous,
To love in its bosom only the cherished shadows.
Who was I to you but a big mud puppet?

I was in your hands the work of the mad painter
Who thinks he is enjoying the colours of an
eternal evening,
But sometimes it disembowels mother humanity.
Who shall I be to you but a great standing
puppet?

One winter day I was the ashes of your fire,
That morning I was the weight of the unfortunate,
I was in the evening dying the evils of the poor
good,

I was in the grey night a number, hung,
I was at the gear one piece, lost,
The man without heart, the man without rights,
the man without name.

~~~~~  
11. Listen to the poem! ▶

# Nul ne doit

Emmanuel Brasseur (CANADA)

Nul ne doit  
mais j'ai un rêve  
je le cache  
pas un grand  
douze centimètres  
un livret pour une frontière  
parce qu'ici  
rien n'est bon  
Défendeurs, sortez-moi de là  
mon frère a disparu  
nul ne doit  
depuis des mois  
rien vu rien entendu  
traces de sang  
rien vu  
ma sœur violée  
nul ne doit  
corps déchiqueté  
rien vu  
sortez-moi de là  
je me tue pour des salauds  
qui me crache au visage  
Stay with me Defenders  
droit à la liberté  
de ne pas être respecté  
de la fermer  
d'endurer  
d'être torturé  
nul ne doit  
j'ai pas choisi  
Stay with me  
Défendeurs, sortez-moi de là  
je n'ai pas pu grandir  
avec mes parents  
projeté  
dans cette violence  
enfant soldat  
nul n'est sensé  
droit de vivre  
je ne veux que mourir  
sécurité  
on a tous peur  
sortez-moi de là  
nul ne doit  
conflit

résistance  
nul ne doit  
camps et réhabilitation  
encore plus enfermé  
sortez-moi de là  
nul ne doit  
soldat  
esclave  
jouet sexuel  
sortez-moi de là  
nul ne doit  
trafic d'organes  
prostitution  
pour pas un rond  
Stay with me Defenders  
nul ne sera soumis  
rien vu et ça continue  
allo  
quelqu'un  
sortez-moi de là  
protection  
terre d'asile  
Stand by Defenders  
nul ne doit  
asile de fou  
on a détruit ma maison  
rien entendu  
expulsion  
plus le droit  
de circuler  
couvre-feu  
plus d'abris  
Défendeurs, sortez-moi de là  
je vais me trouver un trou  
et me cacher  
pour les vingt prochaines an-  
nées  
quitter son pays mais personne  
ne veut de moi  
nul ne doit  
et ce mirador qui me guette  
coup de feu  
rien entendu  
suis-je mort ?  
sortez-moi de là  
Stay with me

sans corps ni tombe  
détention  
rien vu  
la junte a éteint mes prières  
même mon dieu m'a lâché  
nul ne doit  
s'exprimer  
les services secrets  
me ferment la gueule  
avant même que je l'ouvre  
bien placée  
entre les deux yeux  
à distance  
nul ne doit  
surtout pas moi  
pense, mange, prie comme eux  
et même là  
on peut toujours te faire cla-  
quer  
juste pour le plaisir  
juste un trophée  
nul ne doit  
sortez-moi de là  
égalité  
démocratie  
justice indépendante  
nul ne peut  
changement  
nul ne veut  
je vais offrir ma vie en pâture  
à ces ordures  
me jeter sur les barbelés  
en hurlant liberté  
Défendeurs, sortez-moi de là  
j'avais un rêve tellement petit.





# No one shall

Emmanuel Brasseur (CANADA)

No one shall  
but I have a dream  
I hide it  
not a great  
twelve centimetres  
a booklet for a border  
because here  
nothing is good  
Defendants, get me out of here  
my brother is missing  
no one shall  
for months  
nothing seen nothing heard  
blood trails  
nothing seen  
my sister raped  
no one shall  
shredded body  
nothing seen  
get me out of here  
I kill myself for bastards  
who spits in my face  
Stay with me Defenders  
right to freedom  
not being respected  
to close it  
to endure  
to be tortured  
no one shall  
I did not choose  
Stay with me  
Defendants, get me out of here  
I couldn't grow up  
with my parents  
projected  
in this violence  
child soldier  
no one is supposed to  
right to live  
I only want to die  
security  
we are all afraid  
get me out of here  
no one shall  
conflict  
resistance

no one shall  
camps and rehabilitation  
even more locked up  
get me out of here  
no one shall  
soldier  
slave  
sex toy  
get me out of here  
no one shall  
organ trafficking  
prostitution  
for not a penny  
Stay with me Defenders  
no one shall be subjected  
nothing seen and it continues  
hello  
someone  
get me out of here  
protection  
land of asylum  
Stand by Defenders  
no one shall  
madhouse  
my house was destroyed  
nothing heard  
expulsion  
no longer the right  
to circulate  
curfew  
more shelters  
Defendants, get me out of here  
I'll find a hole  
and hide myself  
for the next twenty years  
leave their country but no one  
doesn't want me  
no one shall  
and this watchtower that is wait-  
ing for me  
shot  
nothing heard  
Am I dead?  
get me out of here  
Stay with me  
without a body or a grave

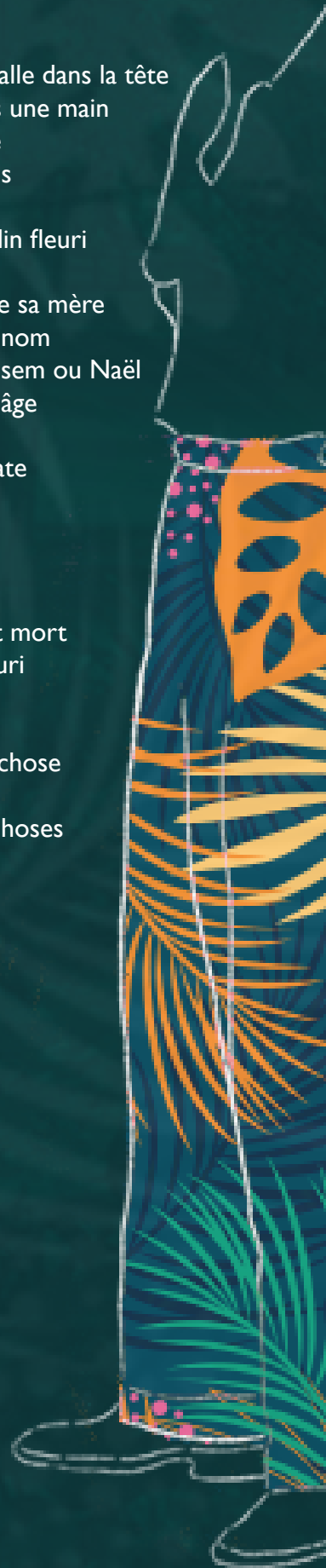
detention  
nothing seen  
the junta has extinguished my  
prayers  
even my god has let go of me  
no one shall  
express themselves  
the secret services  
shut me up  
before I even open it  
well placed  
between the two eyes  
remotely  
no one shall  
especially not me  
think, eat, pray like them  
and even there  
you can always be slammed  
just for fun  
just a trophy  
no one shall  
get me out of here  
equality  
democracy  
independent justice  
no one can  
change  
no one wants  
I will offer my life as a gift  
to these bastards  
throw myself on the barbed wire  
screaming freedom  
Defendants, get me out of here  
I had such a small dream.

# Le pantalon à plis

Emile Brugière (FRANCE)


Il avait mis son pantalon à plis  
celui des cérémonies des jours de fête  
non pas que ce soit le plus joli  
mais le dernier qu'il avait à se mettre  
il a marché longtemps  
les épaules ouvertes au quatre vents  
aux nuages à la poussière  
il a serré les dents mangé du carton  
les poings fermés sur la maison abandonnée  
les ruines et le visage de sa sœur  
gris de cendre et de paradis  
il a marché longtemps les yeux ouverts  
sur le chemin laissé derrière lui  
les valises ébréchées remplies de vestiges  
de photos de famille  
et d'un pull tricoté des mains de sa mère  
il a brassé des vagues  
a cru mourir cent fois dans l'écume mordante  
a injurié les cieux  
a sourit à la terre ferme  
qui dessinait au loin un nouveau pays  
il a dit merci  
il a été poli  
il s'est assis là où on lui a dit  
il a caché ses mains sales  
dans les poches de son pantalon à plis  
et attendu  
attendu  
attendu  
que la vie commence à nouveau  
ce matin il s'est réveillé  
les pieds gelés le ventre affamé  
son pantalon à plis fatigué  
et toujours son plus beau sourire  
et toujours les yeux rivés  
sur les montagnes  
et ce qu'il imaginait au-delà  
quand on lui a dit de courir  
il s'est souvenu de sa sœur  
de son visage plein de rires  
du jardin en fleurs  
et de la voix de son père

quand il a reçu la première balle dans la tête  
il tenait un chiffon blanc dans une main  
et son passeport dans l'autre  
comme deux petits étendards  
il est mort ainsi  
loin de sa maison de son jardin fleuri  
il portait son pantalon à plis  
et le pull tricoté des mains de sa mère  
si vous voulez connaître son nom  
il s'appelait Mohamed ou Bassem ou Naël  
si vous voulez connaître son âge  
il avait vingt deux ans  
si vous voulez connaître la date  
c'était mardi dernier  
si vous voulez savoir  
qui a tiré la première balle  
vous ne le saurez jamais  
si vous voulez savoir où il est mort  
c'était dans le petit jardin fleuri  
qui sentait bon le pain grillé  
et le café au lait  
c'est en tout cas la dernière chose  
à laquelle il a pensé  
car c'était bien là les seules choses  
qu'il était venu chercher  
un peu de pain  
et un morceau de jardin.



# The pleated trousers

Emile Brugière (FRANCE)



He had put on his pleated trousers  
The one of the ceremonies of the feast days  
not that it is the prettiest  
but the last one he had to put on  
he walked for a long time  
facing the four winds  
the clouds, the dust  
he gritted his teeth and ate cardboard  
closed fists on the abandoned house  
the ruins and the face of his sister  
ash and paradise grey  
he walked for a long time with his eyes open  
on the path left behind  
chipped suitcases filled with relics  
of family photos  
and a jumper knitted by her mother's hands  
he stirred up waves  
thought he would die a hundred times  
in the biting foam  
he insulted the heavens  
he smiled at the land  
that drew a new country in the distance  
he said thank you  
he was polite  
he sat where he was told  
he hid his dirty hands  
in the pockets of his pleated trousers  
and he waited  
waited  
waited  
that life begins again  
this morning he woke up  
frozen feet, hungry stomach  
his tired pleated trousers  
and always his best smile  
and always the eyes riveted  
on the mountains  
and what he imagined beyond  
when he was told to run  
he remembered his sister  
of her face full of laughter  
of the garden in bloom  
and his father's voice

when he was first shot in the head  
he held a white cloth in one hand  
and his passport in the other  
like two little banners  
he died like this  
away from his home and flower garden  
he was wearing his pleated trousers  
and the jumper knitted by his mother's hands  
if you want to know his name  
his name was Mohamed or Bassem or Naël  
if you want to know its age  
he was twenty-two years old  
if you want to know the date  
it was last Tuesday  
if you want to know who fired the first bullet  
you will never know  
if you want to know where he died  
it was in the little flower garden  
that smelled like toast  
and coffee with milk  
this is the last thing  
that he thought of  
for these were the only things  
that he had come for  
some bread  
and a piece of garden.

13. Listen to the poem!

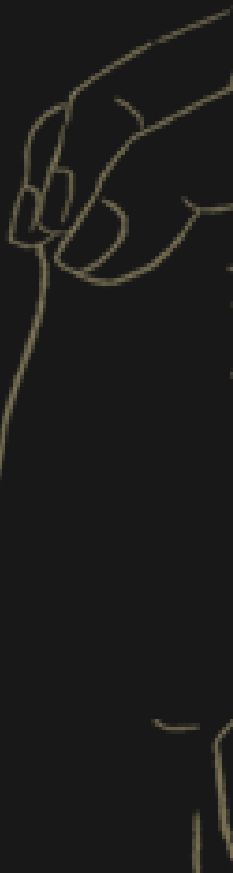
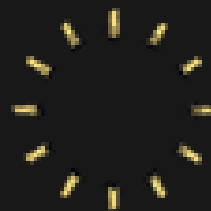


# Épistolaire de l'humaine humanité à l'homme

Ruth Rose Evemb'a Ndito (CAMEROUN)

Homme, tu aimerais bien comprendre  
Ce qui m'incite irrésistiblement à me jeter  
Sous une pluie de balles et d'offenses  
Pour abriter cet enfant égaré  
Tu voudrais bien savoir  
Ce qui se passe dans ma tête  
Pourquoi mon absence tous les soirs ?  
Lors des sorties, des rendez-vous, des fêtes  
Et pourquoi au moindre appel, je fonce  
frénétiquement  
Là où la veuve et l'orphelin quêtent du  
secours désespérément  
Là où les larmes de l'enfant hurlent à la faim  
perpétuellement  
Là où l'arc s'échappe des mains d'un cupidon  
adolescent  
Là où à visage découvert règne la maltraitance  
servile  
Les viols, les violences, les mesquineries  
débiles  
Des tyrans tyrannisant leurs populations  
Des opposants jetés sans procès en prison  
Reste avec moi, viens  
Enlace tes doigts aux miens  
Sache que l'âme de la défenseuse qui partout  
conjure les sorts  
C'est le carburant de l'amoureuse qui t'aime  
si fort  
Mon alter ego... Je n'ai jamais eu une autre  
ambition  
Que celle de faire revivre cette magnifique  
humanité  
Celle que me dessinait à coups de  
nombreuses oraisons  
Mon exceptionnelle, majestueuse trimillénaire  
mémé  
L'obligeance de faire reculer cette fin qui se  
prédisait

Dans les carnages de cœur,  
les massacres de vie  
De culture, de nature, d'héritage, de société  
De nation, de civilisation, d'humanité  
Reste avec moi, mon mari  
Sœur, père, mère, ami  
Tu sais que je ne peux vivre dans le remords  
Il est de mon droit de cibler et d'attaquer le  
tort  
Homme, un jour certainement tu me  
demanderas  
Pourquoi pas les autres, pourquoi toujours  
moi là-bas  
Sache que c'est une question que j'ai depuis  
dépassé  
C'est à chaque être humain de prendre ses  
responsabilités  
Et surtout, lorsque je songe à ces rires  
magiques  
D'enfants qui m'entourent de Syrie en Afrique  
Et que je me plonge dans leurs deux rayons  
d'espoir  
C'est le bonheur que je ne cesse d'y voir!!  
Reste avec moi, tiens  
Enlace mes doigts aux tiens  
Homme, sache que l'âme de la défenseuse qui  
partout conjure les sorts  
C'est cela même le carburant de l'amoureuse  
qui t'aime si fort...



# Epistolary from human humanity to man

Ruth Rose Evemb'a Ndito (CAMEROON)

Man, you'd like to understand  
What makes me want to throw myself  
Under a rain of bullets and offenses  
To shelter this lost child

You would like to know  
What's going on in my head  
Why am I absent every night?  
On outings, appointments, parties  
And why, at the slightest call, I frantically rush

Where the widow and the orphan  
desperately seek help  
Where the child's tears cry out in perpetual  
hunger  
Where the bow escapes from the hands of an  
adolescent cupid  
Where openly slavery reigns  
The rapes, the violence, the stupid pettiness  
Tyrants tyrannising their populations  
Opponents thrown into prison without trial  
Stay with me, come

Wrap your fingers around mine  
Know that the soul of the defender who  
everywhere conjures up the spells  
It's the fuel of the lover who loves you so much  
My alter ego... I never had any other ambition  
That of reviving this magnificent humanity  
The one that I drew with many orations  
My exceptional, majestic grandmother  
The obligation to postpone this predicted end  
In the carnage of the heart, the slaughter of life  
Of culture, nature, heritage, society  
Of nation, of civilisation, of humanity  
Stay with me, my husband  
Sister, father, mother, friend  
You know I can't live with remorse  
It is my right to target and attack the wrong  
Man, one day you will certainly ask me  
Why not the others, why always me there  
You should know that this is a question I have  
since outgrown  
It is up to each human being to take responsibility  
And above all, when I think of that magical  
laughter  
Of children who surround me from Syria to Africa  
And that I immerse myself in their two rays of  
hope  
That's the happiness I keep seeing in it!  
Stay with me, here  
Wrap my fingers around yours  
Man, know that the soul of the defender who  
everywhere conjures up the spells  
This is the fuel of the lover who loves you so  
much...

14. Listen to the poem!



# Tambour des silences

Epiphanie Dionrang

(TCHAD)

Il est des regards remplis de poésie  
Des lèvres chargées d'histoires, mais qui  
jamais n'oseront parler  
Il est des bras qui portent la vie, mais qui ne  
peuvent se porter eux-mêmes  
Il est des corps fragiles qui portent le monde,  
mais qui ne vivent plus dans le monde

Il est des cris qui au fond des silences  
résonnent  
Des larmes qui derrière les sourires dansent  
Des douleurs acquises comme fatalité qui  
comme un héritage, sont transmis de silence  
en silence

Il est des espoirs qui se nourrissent de  
désespoir  
Des nids de bonheur qui ne savent pas la joie  
de vivre  
Il est des prouesses qui on a appris qu'elles ne  
sont et ne valent rien

Il est des mains qui font le monde, mais qui  
chaque jour quémandent leur pain  
Des forces surhumaines qui portent des  
nations, mais qui n'ont pas droit à la parole

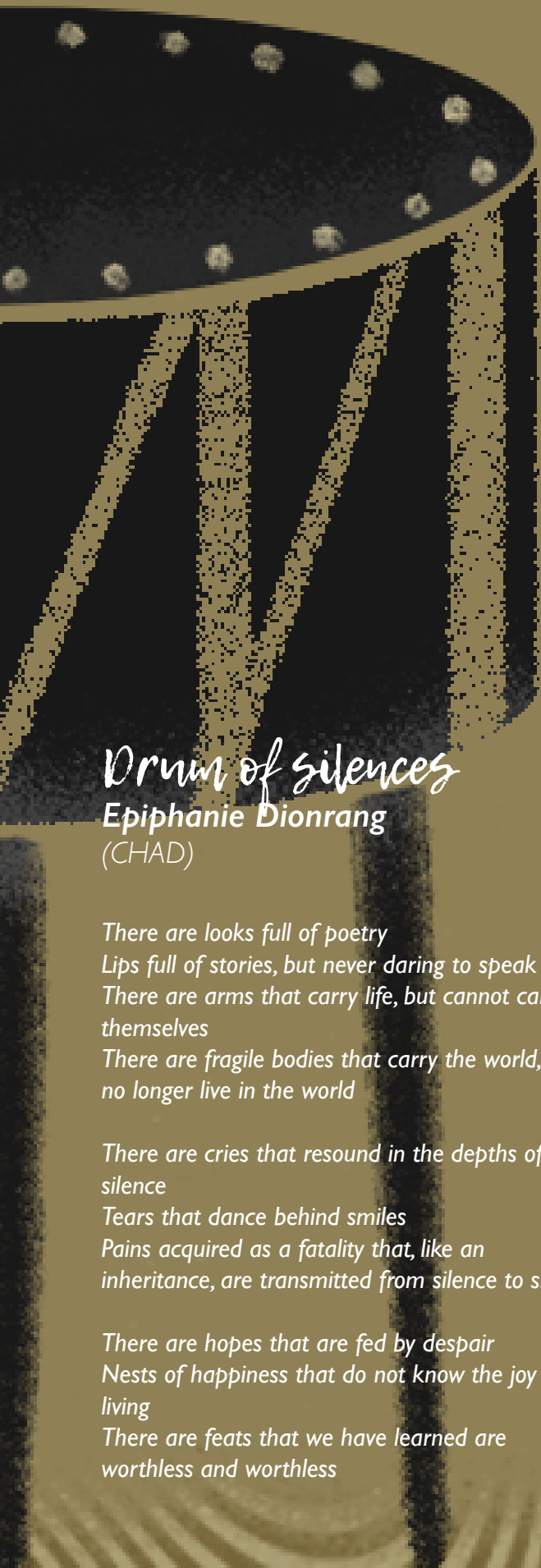
Il est des cris qui au fond des silences  
résonnent  
Ces êtres si fragiles, mais si forts à qui on a fait  
croire qu'ils ne sont rien  
Il y a ces êtres qu'on craint et qu'on a muselé  
Ces voix trop vives et trop viriles pour êtres  
celles de femmes  
Il y a ces sexes faibles qui ont pourtant appris  
aux forts ce qu'est un homme  
Il y a ces femmes dont l'intelligence et le verbe  
dérangent  
Ces femmes dont les tambours d'allégresse  
ont été enchaînés et mis au cachot  
Il y a ces tambours qui sont devenus silences  
Tambour de silence

Il y a cette femme qui porte le monde  
Qui de ses petites mains nourrissent des  
centaines d'âme  
Mais à qui on a dit que la voix ne comptait pas

Tu es cette femme qu'ils craignent  
Tu es cette intelligence qu'ils redoutent  
Tu es ce rêve dont ils redoutent la réalisation  
Tu es cet espoir qu'ils ont mal au cœur de voir  
germer

Tu es cette petite chose qui fait trembler ces  
hommes forts  
Alors de ta petite voix, brille  
Brille dans les ténèbres où ils t'ont enfermé  
Que ton cri résonne comme un tambour  
Et que la poésie de tes douleurs traversent les  
âges  
De ta petite voix,  
Résonne par delà les nations et va leur dire  
Que la petite chose qu'ils craignent est  
réveillée  
Résonne





## *Drum of silences*

**Epiphane Dionrang**

(CHAD)

There are looks full of poetry  
Lips full of stories, but never daring to speak  
There are arms that carry life, but cannot carry themselves  
There are fragile bodies that carry the world, but no longer live in the world

There are cries that resound in the depths of silence  
Tears that dance behind smiles  
Pains acquired as a fatality that, like an inheritance, are transmitted from silence to silence

There are hopes that are fed by despair  
Nests of happiness that do not know the joy of living  
There are feats that we have learned are worthless and worthless

There are hands that make the world, but every day they beg for their bread  
Superhuman forces that carry nations, but are not allowed to speak

There are cries that resound in the depths of silence  
These beings, so fragile, but so strong, who have been made to believe that they are nothing  
There are those beings that we fear and that we have muzzled  
These voices, too lively and too virile to be those of women  
There are those weak sexes who have taught the strong what a man is  
There are those women whose intelligence and words are disturbing  
Those women whose drums of joy have been chained and dunked  
There are those drums that have become silent  
Silent drum

There is this woman who carries the world  
Who with his little hands feed hundreds of souls  
But who was told that the voice did not count

You are that woman they fear  
You are that intelligence which they fear  
You are the dream they fear to realize  
You are the hope that they ache to see germinate

You are that little thing that makes these strong men tremble  
So with your little voice, shine  
Shine in the darkness where they have locked you up  
Let your cry sound like a drum  
And may the poetry of your pain live on through the ages  
In your little voice,  
Resonate across the nations and tell them  
That the little thing they fear is awake

Resonates

~~~~~  
15. Listen to the poem! ▶



Balas para Quatro Meninas

Maria de Fátima Ribeiro Soares
(BRASIL)

Duas meninas brincam
Ternura no parquinho
Do condomínio fechado.

Doces balas, merendas, prendas
Para meninas
Sabores de Infâncias contempladas.

Duas meninas brincam e morrem
No batente da porta da frente
Do barraco
Balas calam a ternura
São mais dois assassinatos.

Dor de balas, susto, tombo
Para meninas
Sabores de infâncias dizimadas.

Não há bala perdida
Balas são ofertadas, recebidas
Há embalagens e miras.

Trajetórias certeiras
Sabor de festa ou de sangue
Para meninas
Com endereços e cor.

Hard candy for four little girls

Maria de Fátima Ribeiro Soares
(BRAZIL)

Two little girls play
Life is tender in the playground
Within the community's gates.

Sweet hard candy, snacks, knickknacks
For little girls
Celebrated childhoods, candy-flavored.

Two little girls play and die
On the front steps
Of their shacks
Bullets that silence what was tender
Two more killings on impact.

Pain from bullets, startles, tumbles
For little girls
Wiped out childhoods, sour-flavored.

There's no such thing as a bullet astray
Bullets are taken; they're given away
There is chewing gum wrapper or spewing gun's aim.

Clearly defined trajectories
Flavored like party or blood
For little girls
With addresses and color.

16. Listen to the poem! ►

Poesia (?) pelos/dos Direitos Humanos no Brasil

Tamires Fernanda Baptista Frasson (BRASIL)

Há poesia quando se trata de
Direitos Humanos no Brasil?
Há poesia dos Direitos
Humanos no Brasil.

A poesia pelos Direitos
Humanos no Brasil:

Falo daqui
Se do centro ou da margem
Não dá para definir
Depende do ponto de vista
Não de quem vê
Mas... em quem arde

E parte...
Agora é tarde.
Agora é tarde?
Não, nunca é tarde!

É preciso mover
É preciso dizer
São 200 mil pessoas em
situação de rua
Quase 800 mil privadas de
liberdade
Somos o quinto país que mais
mata mulheres apenas por
serem mulheres
E arde...

Sem falar de raça
Sem falar de religião
Sem falar dos povos originários
E continua ardendo...
Infelizmente, nada disso é do
nosso imaginário

Mas, ainda há poesia?
Vulnerabilidade social
Acesso desigual
Políticas públicas ineficazes
Minimizar agravantes, parece
não ser a principal vontade
Investimento em cultura e
esporte não é a realidade

É desemprego ou subemprego
Condições escassas de se viver
com dignidade

Marginalização e exclusão:
Ou se está na margem
Ou nem nela cabe
Fica fora
Fora de que?
Fora de onde?
Se os centros não funcionam
sem essa mão de obra barata
Sem o capital humano?

E ainda dizem que está tudo
normal
Tudo nos conformes
Inventaram o termo
"insegurança alimentar"
Para mascarar a fome

É miséria e desilusão
Sonhar? Só se for com a
possibilidade de comprar o pão

Infraestrutura urbana é luxo
Se tem moradia, já está mais do
que bom
Saúde, lazer, educação?
Aí já é demais
Não dá para prometer, não...
Infâncias roubadas
Calamidade decretada
E o fim disso tudo, já sabemos:
É a não garantia de nossos
direitos

A não ser que nos levantemos
E LUTEMOS!

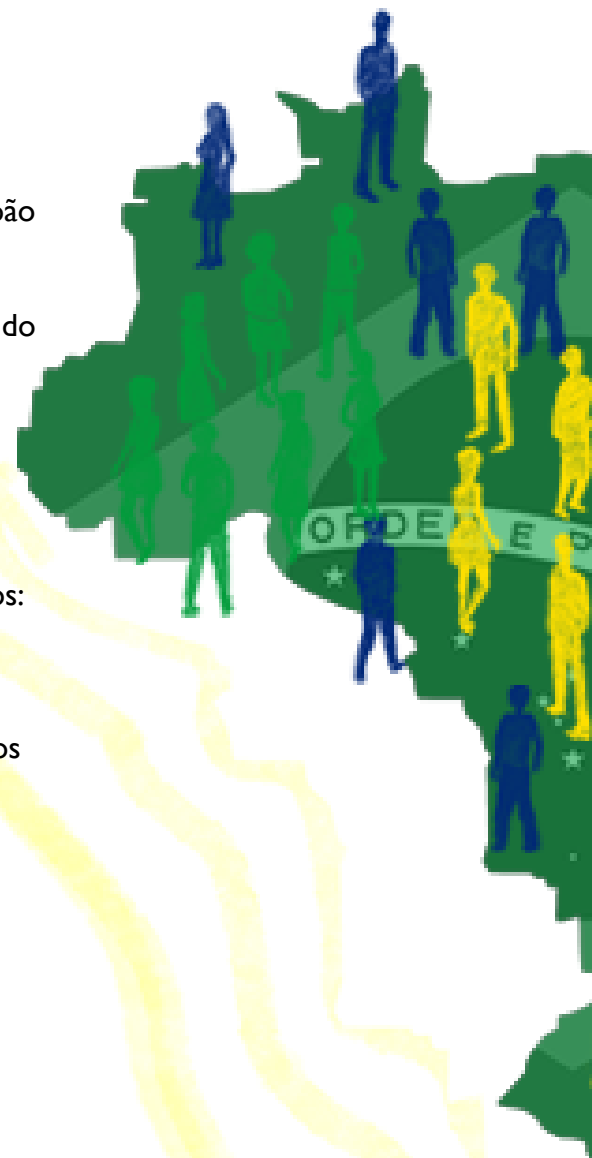
É ir pro combate
É resistir

Nunca é tarde!

É preciso mover
É preciso dizer

Nunca é tarde
Porque ainda arde
Porque ainda há a arte.

Porque ainda há gente.
As gentes.
Porque ainda há a gente.
Agente.
Em frente!



Poetry (?) for/of Human Rights in Brazil

Tamires Fernanda Baptista Frasson (BRAZIL)

Is there poetry when it comes to
Human Rights in Brazil?
There is poetry about Human
Rights in Brazil.

Poetry for Human Rights in Brazil:
This is where I speak from
Center or margin
It can't be defined
That is up to the point of view
Not from those who are looking
But... those on whom it stings
and aches

Those who leave us in their
wake...
Now, it is too late.
But is now too late?
No, it is never late!

We need to get up
We need to speak up
200 thousand sleeping
on the streets
Nearly 800 thousand with no
freedom to embrace
5th country to kill more women
for being women
And it stings, and it aches...

Not to mention race
Not to mention religion
Not to mention the indigenous
And it continues to sting...
Sadly, none of it fictitious
But is there still poetry?

Social vulnerability
Inequitable accessibility
Inefficient public policies
Lessening crime aggravation
doesn't seem like a priority
Investments in culture and sports
never part of our reality

Unemployment or
underemployment
Scarcity preventing from living with
dignity

Sidelineing and exclusion:
You're either at the margins
Or don't even fit into those
You stand outside
But outside of what?
Outside of where?
If centers can't run without cheap
workforce
Without human capital?

And they tell us this is normal
All as it should, according to plan
They made up the term "food
insecurity"
To mask the hunger of a man

It is misery and being misled
A dream? Affording a loaf of bread
Urban infrastructure is a luxury
Having a home ought to be good
enough.
Health, education, leisure time to
be had?
That's asking too much
Can't make such promise
ironclad...

Childhoods ensnared
Calamity declared
And the end is no surprise:
No assurance of our rights

Unless, that is, we rise
If we stand up and if we FIGHT!

It's facing the battle
It's resisting
It is never late!

We need to get up
We need to speak up

It is never late
For it all still stings
And for art still springs.

For there are people still.
There are the people who do.
For there is still us all.
Us, people, to go to.
On we go, we stand tall!

17. Listen to the poem! ►



Ninguém é de aço, é normal o cansaço

Samuel Lourenço Filho
(BRASIL)

É flexível

As vezes parecer ser de fibra
Atuação incrível
Trata-se de defender a vida.

É forte

Atua com bastante solidez
Cultua a vida, não celebra a morte
Ultraja qualquer resquício de hediondez.

É intransigente

Preza pelo direito do culpado ou inocente
O que vale é a vida do ser livre ou penitente
Dignidade no trato, ninguém é indigente.

É como lança

Acerta o alvo confiança
Com destemor avança
Preserva o adolescente ou a criança.

São voluntários

São profissionais
E a depender do cenário
São vistos como marginais.

São seres humanos

Protege o semelhante em todos os espaços
Pra alegres, ora chorando
Ninguém é de aço, é normal o cansaço.

Quem são?

Há circunstâncias que é preciso anonimato
Em outras a solidão
Pois corre risco de sofrer um assassinato.

Apesar de tudo, insistem em continuar

Sabem que a vida é o bem maior
O poema é pra reafirmar
Que a atuação de vocês faz o mundo ser melhor.

*No one's made of steel,
feel as tired as you feel*

Samuel Lourenço Filho
(BRAZIL)

It is flexible

*Sometimes like it's made of fiber
A work that's so incredible
Ensuring every life is well looked-after.*

It is tough

*It works with solidness
It worships life, not death
Outrages any trace of hideousness.*

It is intransigent

*Cherishes the rights of the guilty and the innocent
There's value in the life of the free or the penitent
Dignified treatment, no man should be indigent.*

It is somewhat like a spear

*Hits target straight and center, not near!
It always goes on, no place for fear
Teenager and child, it holds most dear.*

They are volunteers

*They are professionals
And depending on which story you hear
They're looked upon as criminals.*

They're human beings

*Protect their equals, they always will
Amidst tears of joy or tears of grief
No one's made of steel, feel as tired as you feel.*

Who are they, you may ask?

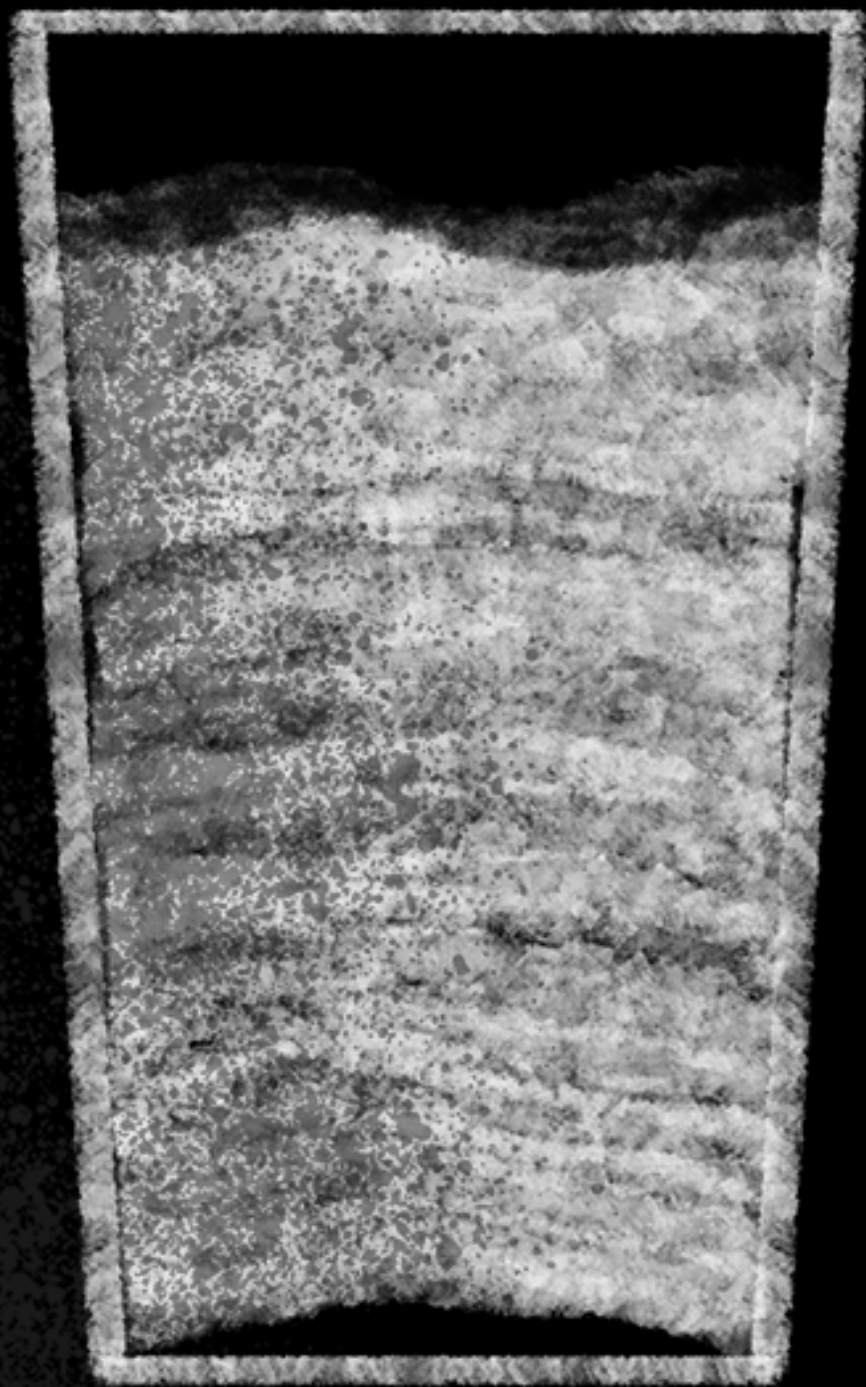
*Some circumstances require anonymity.
There is loneliness in the task
And a risk of being killed for their activity.*

Despite it all, they insist on moving on

*For they know life's the highest grace.
This poem's meant to reconfirm
Your work makes the world a better place.*

18. Listen to the poem!





Oração
Maria Ribeiro
(BRASIL)

Menino branco
Toma
Um copo de leite branco
Deita
Menino branco
No lençol branco
Come
Menino branco
Mingau branco
Sua colher branca é bonita
Sua mãe branca que me olha como
quem castiga
Porque eu sede sono fome falta
Minha mãe negra trabalha muito e
Toma, mãe
Deita, mãe
Come, mãe
Mãe negra é bonita também
Põe eu no colo quando aflito na
cama
Eu grito toda noite
E branco
O quarto
Para fora me derrama

Prayer
Maria Ribeiro
(BRAZIL)

White boy
Drink it
A glass of white milk
Lie down
White boy
On your white sheets
Eat up
White boy
Your white oatmeal
Your white spoon is pretty
Your white mom eyes me punishingly
Because I, thirst hunger lack
My black mom works too much and
Here, mom
Lie down, mom
Eat up, mom
Black mothers are pretty too
Hold me tight, when, in bed, I thrash
about
I scream every night
And the bedroom,
White,
Pours me out

19. Listen to the poem! ▶

Prece

Rafael Zãn (BRASIL)

Prece de um ansioso

Ó meu senhor, minha senhora

Acendo-te esta vela às duas da manhã
Pois já está passando da hora
Minha insônia é de uma ansiedade tamanha

Há horas que eu rolo na cama
E quero lhes dizer com esta luz de testemunha
Que importância tem a falta de esperança?
Dos que estão sem lar, e sempre em mudança?

Eu sei que já está tarde
e tenho onde me deitar
Que tenho um lençol que me aquece
E o que me alimentar
Mas, sei que estás aqui, ouvindo minha prece

Lhe pergunto:
e os seres humanos que estão sem lar?
Jogados ao relento?
Sem abraços de travesseiros, sem chá
Sem seu cobertor, largados ao vento

O que me dizes? O que farás?
Muitos creem em ti
É assim, de fome e sede morrerás?
Eu lhe sinto, sei que existe.

Agora já são quatro da manhã
E vou lhe confessar minha infância
Também já passei fome
E por tudo que já vivi e vi
Me tornei adulto desde criança

Talvez isso me abriu os olhos
De enxergar os desabrigados
De molho, inundados
Se hoje Jesus voltar
Os que usam seu nome
iriam novamente pregá-lo

E quando dizem ao seu desânimo
Onde está a beleza da vida?
O por que de tanta dor?
Dos dias escuros e do remédio da ferida
que não sei pra onde eu ando.

E Quando se pensa
na fome que existe no mundo?
De tanta gente e de tanto nome
E o por que desse buraco tão fundo?

E quando se pensa em desistir?
Dos tropeços dessa caminhada
Do choro de quem queria sorrir
Dos sem caminho, dos sem estrada

E quando se pensa nos sem teto
Me dá um troço na alma
Por ver os que ficam quieto
Por seus calos feridos, em palma

Já são seis da manhã
Alvorada se aproxima
Vou preparar meu café
Rezo para que mude o clima
E os que se arrastam pelo chão
Fiquem de pé

Porque fé, haja fé.

Plea

Rafael Zãn (BRAZIL)

Prayer of an anxious one

Oh my lord, oh my lady

It is two in the morning
as I light you this candle
For it is almost past time already
My insomnia and anxiety so much to handle

I've been tossing and turning for hours
And I mean to tell you,
with this light as my witness:
What importance is there to hopelessness?
Of those always on the move,
facing ongoing homelessness?

I know that it's late and
I've a bed to call my own
That I've a set of sheets
to keep me nice and warm
And that I have food on my plate I can feed on
But, still, I know you're here, and that my prayer
you, too, can hear

And I ask you: What of men finding themselves
with no ceiling?

Sleeping rough, lying out in the cold
No hot tea to drink, no pillows, no dreaming
No blanket, discarded,
taking every harsh wind blow

What do you say? What will you do?
So many in a belief of you persist.
Is that it? Die of thirst and of hunger too?
I know you're there, I can feel you exist.

It is already four in the morning
And I'll confess my first years to you
I know how being hungry feels too
And for all that I have lived and seen
I became an adult before I was even a teen

Perhaps this is what opened my eyes
To see those panhandling
Suspended and soaking
If Jesus was to return today
He'd be preached by the ones
who use his name

And when they address their dismay and say:
Where is it, the beauty of life?
Why such a great amount of pain?
So many dark days and drugs for the strife
that I'm left not knowing where I can go to.

And what of the famine
that into our world seeps?
Affecting so many people and so many names?
And what of the whys of a hole so, so deep?

And when you think of quitting
All the stumbles along the way
The tears of men who should be grinning
The ones without a say, with no road on which to
stay

When you think of those
with no roof over their heads
My soul itself, it revolts and it churns
At the ones who see but pretend to be dead
For their fellows men's open,
raw wounds and burns

It is now six in the morning
Sunrise will soon be here
A pot of coffee I will make
And pray a weather change is near
And that those who crawl along the floor
Get on their feet and upright stay

Because of faith, much faith, it takes.

20. Listen to the poem!





คนบ้าที่กล้าฝัน

ทรงพล สนธิรักษ์
(ประเทศไทย)

ฉันเป็นเหมือนคนบ้าที่กล้าฝัน
เพราะอยากเห็นคืนวันที่ฝันถึง
ที่หลายคนต่างเฝ้ามองอย่างรำพึง
เฝ้ามองถึงสังคมใหม่ที่งดงาม

เมื่อก่อนนั้นฉันเคยละเลยสิทธิ์
ปล่อยชีวิตให้ไร้สินซึ่งคำถาม
จนสังคมที่เคยดีมันดำทราวม
จึงต้องตั้งคำถามหาความจริง

ฉันจึงเริ่มด้วยการเพิ่มความสงสัย
ถึงบางเรื่องที่แปลกไปในหลายสิ่ง
ทั้งเรื่องนี้เรื่องนั้นถูกช่วงชิง
ถึงความจริงที่ควรเป็นไม่เห็นเลย

ฉันจึงต้องลุกขึ้นออกมาพูด
มาพิสูจน์ถึงความจริงอย่างเปิดเผย
มาตอกย้ำทำต่ออย่างที่เคย
เพื่อเฉลยถึงความจริงที่เจอมา

ความจริงที่ประชาชนถูกกดหัว
ให้หวาดกลัวจนตัวต้องหวาดผวา
มันปิดปากฝากขังด้วยเงินตรา
ใช้อำนาจกักขฬประชาชน

ความจริงที่หลายคนต้องไร้สิทธิ์
ถูกจำกัดทางความคิดอย่างไรผล
ถูกลดทอนคุณค่าความเป็นคน
ให้ต้องทนต่อสังคมที่เป็นไป

ฉันจึงต้องกล้าฝันตั้งคนบ้า
กล้าทลายทิวต่อฟ้าที่กว้างใหญ่
มาท้าทายซึ่งหน้าอย่างตั้งใจ
เพื่อแก้ไขปัญหาตามต้องการ

เพราะสังคมมันมีการกดขี่
จึงต้องมีวิธีการต่อต้าน
และทุกการต่อสู้พร้อมเคียงข้าง
ร่วมต่อต้านสร้างฝันอย่างพร้อมเพรียง

Madhumang Who Dare To Dream

Songphon Sonthirak
(THAILAND)

*I am like a madman for daring to dream
Of the day that I wish on a star
A new, beautiful world many want but can't seem
To do more than watch from afar*

*Before, I ignored my way through life
Any question of rights unheeded
Till society took a moral dive
And a quest to find truth was needed*

*And so I began by asking more questions
Of things that had gotten weird
Wherever I looked I got the impression
That the truth had been disappeared*

*So I had to stand up and speak out about it
To attest to the truth in plain sight
To insist on insisting on things I've encountered
So that the truth comes to light*

*The truth that the people have been cowed
In so much fear their bodies convulse
That with money they muzzle, that with power
They arrest the people's pulse*

*The truth that many must do without rights
Their thought choked with no chance to grow
Their human worth slapped with such a low price
They can't change the status quo*

*Now that is why I shall dare to dream
As a madman dares the sky
To stare face-to-face with the powers that be
And compel them to rectify*

*Because oppression is underway
Resisters must we become
And with every defender shall we stay
To resist—to build dreams as one*

21. Listen to the poem!



โปรดจำไว้.. เราต่างอยู่ข้างเธอ

เมฆ' ครึ่งฟ้า
(ประเทศไทย)

แม้ย่างก้าวยาวไกลใจอย่าท้อ
จงก้าวต่อด้วยสองเท้าบนเก้าอี้
อาจ.. คนรุ่นเรานั่นร้าวราน
แต่เมื่อวานที่สิ้นหวังต่างอัน

แม้ว่าถึงหรือไม่ยังไม่รู้
เมื่อศัตรูถือศาตรามีมาชี้
แต่ดีกว่าต้องก้มหัวชั่วชีวิต
ก่อนคนรุ่นต่อจากนี้จะล้มตา

หน้าที่ของหนุ่มสาว
คือนำทางสังคมเก่าให้ก้าวหน้า
ทุบสวรรค์เบื้องบนให้หล่นลงมา
สู่โลกของคนธรรมดาบนพื้นดิน

โดยไม่มีข้อแม้
คนรุ่นพ่อรุ่นแม่แพ้แล้วทั้งสิ้น
อนาถเหลือ.. เหงื่อที่สู้กิน!
ยังได้ยินอยู่ทุกคืนเสียงปืนดัง

บนถนนนี้ทุกต่อสู้อันไม่รู้จบ
ผู้มาก่อนนอนเป็นศพมีกลบฝัง
ฝากร่างไว้บอกเล่า "ก้าวอย่างระวัง"
ทุกคำคืนพวกเขายังเฝ้าคุ้มครอง

แม้ขวากหนามข้ามไม่พันหลายหนเจ็บ
หลายคนเก็บแผลเก่าเฝ้ากลัดหนอง
เช่นที่เป็นมาเสมอ.. เมื่อเธอมอง
ยังมีเราเหล่าพี่น้องประคองไป

แม้ต้องกลายเป็นขบฏ! มิโดดเดี่ยว
เธอคือทางออกเดียวของคุณสมัย
พังสิ! เสียงของคนทุกข์ ปลุกหัวใจ!
บอกเธอว่า.. เธอไม่ได้เดินผิดทาง

Remember, we're all by your side

Mek Krueng Fah
(THAILAND)

Long as the road may stretch, do not lose heart,
Keep stepping forward through the burnt debris;
Our generation may be torn apart,
But now is not our hopeless history.

We may have arrived, or we may have not,
With foes on horseback, weapons in their hands;
But better this than to accept our lot,
And leave the coming gen no fighting chance.

Young people's job:

Lead old society to make forward strides;
Scatter the riches above among the mob,
Demolish thus the Heaven that divides.

There are no ifs or buts—

Our parents' generation was thoroughly crushed!

How tragic... that voice my sweat you consume
Still echoes every night each cannon boom.

On the road of fighters that will know no end,
The ones who came before lie dead, uncovered;
Their bodies caution "watch your step, my friend,"
And nightly, to protect, their spirits hover.

While at some point the thistles and thorns are bound

To hurt, and some let old sores fester, ooze;
Know that as always... when you look around,

We, your kin, will be there. Never just you,
No, even if you must go underground!

You are the only way out, our way through;
Listen— a voice of the wretched jolts the heart
awake!

Saying... the path you've chosen is not a mistake.

22. Listen to the poem!





ความเป็นมนุษย์

หทัยรัตน์ จตุรวัฒนา
(ประเทศไทย)

“ความเป็นมนุษย์”
‘เปรียง เปรียง เปรียง’ เสียงปืนคืนกาล
ขณะที่มีโนธรรมไร้คำถาม
มีอนันต์แรงไหมไฟให้ไหม้ลาม
แหละเท่านั้นเหยียบข้ามความเป็นมนุษย์

ตัวร้อยพันดวงเทียนแห่งเมียนมาร์
ชีวิตผู้ถูกฆ่า บริสุทธิ
เลือดของนักศึกษาหน้าวัดพุทธ
ยังไม่หยุดหยาดรินแผ่นดินทอง

เขารู้ข้างนอกนั้นอันตราย
เมื่อลูกหมายร่วมหวังชนทั้งผอง
“ไปเถิดเจ้าจงมีเสรีครอง”
พ่อนิ่งมองพร้อมกับชับน้ำตา

พอรุ่งเช้าเขาเปิดประตูบ้าน
พบร่องรอยหลักฐานแห่งการฆ่า
นกสีขาวบินไปไม่กลับมา
สู่ปากฟ้ารุ่งเรือง สู่เมืองงาม

ก็เลือดเนื้อ ที่ร่างกลางถนน
คนกับคน มโนธรรมตั้งคำถาม
เถิดจงร่วมดับไฟที่ไหม้ลาม
อย่างน้อย..ในนามความเป็นมนุษย์

What is human

Hatairatt Jaturawatana
(THAILAND)

Bang bang
the gunshots rang in the dark night
As conscience took
no issue in the slightest
With the hands that fanned
the fire fast consuming
And the feet that walked
all over what is human

Myanmar's lights,
snuffed out by the hundreds
Those slaughtered: innocent.
The blood of students
Right outside temples
still has not congealed
On the Buddhist Golden Land
a killing field

He was aware, out there danger's afoot
When his child joined
hopes with the multitude
“Go, and may Liberty protect you, dear”
Dad gave a long look as he wiped a tear

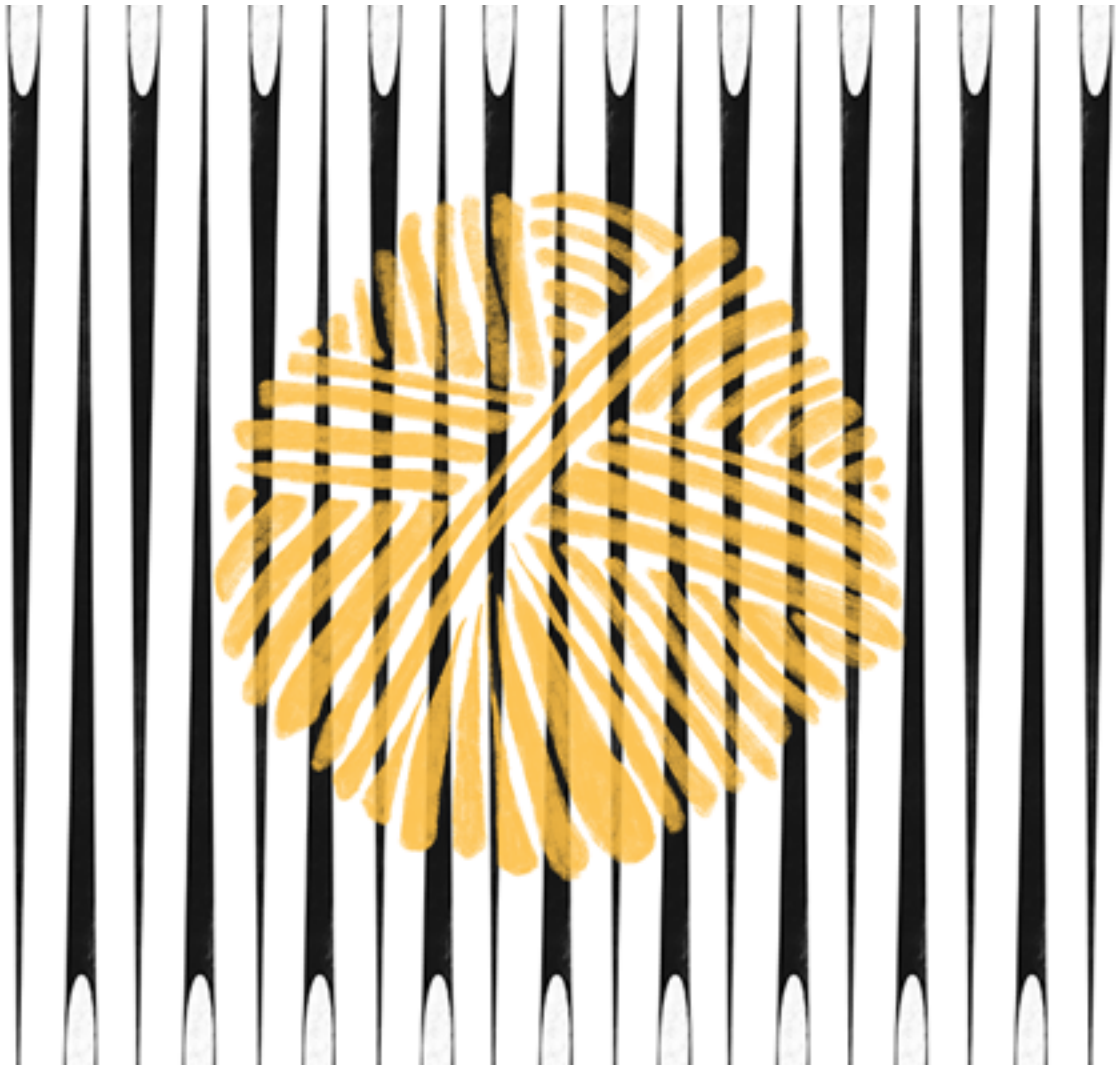
Come morning
he barely had to leave the building
To find some trace,
some evidence of killing
The doves had flown away:
they're gone for good
Gone to a bright sky,
a lovely neighborhood

So many bodies,
so much bloody tissue
Aren't they people?
conscience is taking issue
Let's put out the fire
consuming the streets
For the sake of what is human
- at least.



23. Listen to the poem!





Fix

ปรัชญา พงษ์พานิช
(ประเทศไทย)

เสื้อผ้าของพวกเขาขาดวิน
ฉันมีเข็มส่วนเธอมีด้าย
อาทิตย์ฉายแสงเคียงข้างเรา

Fix

Prachya Pongpanich
(THAILAND)

*Their shirts are torn to shreds
I have a needle, you have thread
The sun is shining by our side*

24. Listen to the poem!





แต่เชียน้อย

จักรพงษ์ ทรวงชมพันธ์
(ประเทศไทย)

หนูตัวเล็กลอดผ่านซี่กรงเหล็ก
ผลุบผลิบเข้าออกเหนือกรอบหน้าต่าง
ผนังห้องลอกลอนจับจ้องเจ้าตัวจิ๋ว
ยุ่งป่องเป่งด้วยเลือดจ้องมองมัน
เจ้าหนูย้อยยุดดวงจันทร์
ดูดเส้นแสงเงินยวงร่วงสู่ห้องขังนักโทษ
แสงจันทร์จับเจ้าหนูตัวเล็ก
พรางระยิบราวเคหวัตถุละล่องร่วมนภากาศ
สุภาพมลิเกมารูยาทนุ่มนวล
ไม่ตี๋ม กิน เช่นเขี้ยวเคี้ยวฟัน
ยามดวงตาวามขลิบวิบเล่ห์
ทอดน่องในคลองจันทร์

25. Listen to the poem!



To Little Sin

Jakraphong Soungchompan
(THAILAND)

The little mouse slips
through the iron bars
steals in and out above
the windowsill
the peeling walls fixate
on the itsy-bitsy one
the mosquito bloated
with blood keeps an eye on it
the mouse catches the moonlight
yanks the silvery rays
down plummeting now to the prison cell
the moon captures our little mouse
bedazzled like a terrestrial body
floating with the ether
fabled mouse polite ladylike
doesn't drink doesn't eat doesn't grind its teeth
while its beady eyes
twinkle in mischief
loitering in the moon canal.



Haki ni mkanda **Ayub Linford Nyanchongi** (KENYA)

Nimeandika jicho mtaani,
yale nawasimulia 'menikera;
Msanii n kioo cha jamii,
haki tumeivuruga na kuivyoga
Akina fulani metusaliti,
bei ghali ya haki nanadia
Adui nnasi asitutishe,
akili kali tukuze.

Tuwalinde wanaotupigania haki,
viongozi kachacha na kutuchafua mio-
yo
Zao n ahadi za kiswahili,
wengine akili zao hamnazo-
Wakitoka chakari, wakirudi chondo!
Kanisa pia 'metuasi,
tukimbilie wapi, ee bwana?

Utumishi kwa wote,
raia kuchukua sheria mkononi
Kawaagizia mawe wezi wote,
na kuwahukumu motoni
Kiini chake kaiba mkate,
na kauacha mkono bila kuutia kinywani
Damu ya wengi iliotiririka yalia,
waliailiwa na kuwawa kinyama

Tusiambulie macho hivi vita,
ama tutaambulia patupu
Tujikakamue kwa hivi vita,
na tubwage uzuzu na utundu
Kila siku tufwate sheria,
haki iwe ngao ya kumbukumbu
Tushambulie huyu mwovu simba,
na tuambue hili ngozi la kondoo.

Tusimame imara kuilinda katiba,
na tusitishwe na mapepo
Hewani tupeperushe bendera,
kwani haki ina mashikio
Kiongozi bora ni mama,
anaongoza kwa matendo
Tuangukie haki mguuni,
kwani haki ni upendo.

Justice is a shield **Ayub Linford Nyanchongi** (KENYA)

*I have written of what's on the streets,
I recount what "irks" me;
The artist is society's mirror,
we have tread and disrupted rights
You so and so's have betrayed us and auctioned
rights at a high price to the Enemy
but we will not be intimidated,
we'll consolidate our ken.*

*Protect those who fight for us,
for leaders have gone stale
and wrecked our hopes
Theirs are duplicitous promises,
their wily intellect is unmatched— some
so quick off the mark,
their return rings a knell!
Church too you've betrayed us,
oh Lord, where is our refuge?*

*Service for all, citizens
take the law in their own hands
Stone all thieves, and damn them to hell
And for stealing bread,
his hand was forfeit without
ever getting to his mouth
the blood of many that flowed cries out,
they were accused and cruelly killed.*

*Let us not merely look at this war,
else we'll leave with aught
Steadfast in this war we should be,
and get rid of stupidity and misbehaviour
Respect the law daily,
using justice as the shield of reference
Tear down this evil lion,
remove his sheep's clothing.*

*Stand tall to defend the constitution,
ne'er fearing evil spirits
Fly the flag in the sky,
for justice has ears
A good leader is a mother,
she leads by deeds
Let us fall at the feet of justice
for justice is love.*

~~~~~  
*26. Listen to the poem!* ►

# Ukweli kamili

## Martin Mwangi

(KENYA)

July 1st to June 30th, the government calendar.  
Hapa ndio sisi wenye nchi tukufu tutakupeleka  
wewe mwanachi mtukufu date.

Relax, usijali

Budget already iko,

Kwa hii relationship yetu

Openness, accountability na public participation  
ndio mtindo.

Kile wewe mwanachi mtukufu unataka  
kitapatikana, lakini kwa sasa itabidi umejipanga  
kwasababu sisi wenye nchi tushaserve menu ile  
tunataka.

Lakini karibu, karibu kwa hii special buffet,  
Leo tunaserve the house specialty,  
unfinished projects tossed in false promises, huh?  
Eti hii dish umezoea?

Oohh yeah, ni ju we've been serving it for a while  
so how about we spice things up kidogo tu,

Do you mind some fried half truths accompanied  
by half information seasoned with a little bit of  
secrecy?

Utaipeleka, kwanza vile tutaipresent kwenye sinia,  
too good to be true utajipata umeingia box hata  
kama hukunua.

Half truths served as main truth resulting to half  
results presented kama full results.

Tutakupa ukweli kamili, lakini si kwa ukamilifu  
(Whispers) Ukweli ni, budget process ni inclusive  
kwa kila mwananchi kutoa maoni

Real truth, process ni inclusive lakini only to the  
parties interested kukutolea maoni.

Uko kwa era ya full truths but told in half truths  
Kwahivo jiulize, kwanini tuweke tarehe ya public  
participation privately?

And if at all we have your best interest at heart...  
then kwanini washikadau same wanapata info  
separately?

Karibu, ni hapa tutakupa mchele njeri sisi tukila

pilau kisha ukicomplain tunakuambia shukuru  
umekula angalau.

Lakini for how long shall you live na hizi half  
truths za angalau?

Mimi sijui, wewe jibu

Huu ni ugonjwa uko nao, and I hope hutapata wa  
kukutibu.

(whisper) Another Truth, we have a national  
budget, very comprehensive with a total figure of  
how much money it will cost.

Real truth, hii budget tuliifanya bila pesa.

They are just mere figures and projections za  
kule tutapata hizo pesa,

Iko hivi, Ni sisi wenye nchi tumeamua kukuwekea  
wewe mwanchi burden ya kuhakikisha ganji za  
budget zimefika.

next time bei ya mafuta ikiongezwa overnight  
usistuke jua ni budget unashugulikia  
Ah! Ah! Pole, Unashower na maji baridi ju token  
zimepanda bei?, ni pesa za budget tunakutafutia.

Na siku ya labour day tukikuongeza mshahara  
kiasi, jua tunataka kukuweka in a higher tax  
bracket ndio utupatie more returns.

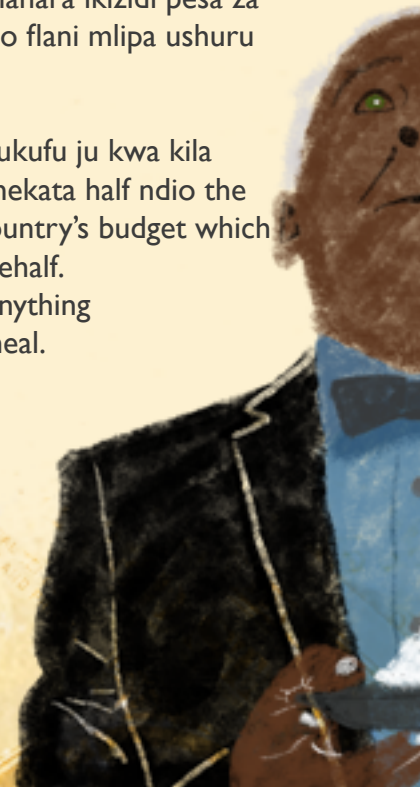
Fanya hesabu!, sorry, acha tukufanyie hesabu.

I mean pesa za kulipa mishahara ikizidi pesa za  
maendeleo, si kuna maeneo flani mlipa ushuru  
anaumia? .

Jiwie radhi mwananchi mtukufu ju kwa kila  
personal budget itabidi umekata half ndio the  
other half you fund the country's budget which  
will be working on your behalf.

But we're not promising anything

But for now, enjoy your meal.



# The full truth

Martin Mwangi  
(KENYA)

July 1st to June 30th, the government calendar.  
This is where we owners of the sacred country  
will take you the sacred citizen on a date  
Relax, don't worry  
There's already a budget  
For this relationship of ours  
Openness, accountability and public participation is  
the way.  
That which you sacred citizen wants will be found,  
but for now you'll have to brace yourself  
because we who own the country  
have already served the menu we want.  
However, welcome, welcome to this special buffet,  
Today, we are serving the house specialty,  
unfinished projects tossed in false promises, huh?  
You say, you're used to this dish?  
Oohh yeah, it's 'coz we've been serving it for a while  
so how about we spice things up just a bit!  
Do you mind some fried half-truths accompanied  
by half information seasoned with a little bit of  
secrecy?  
Firstly you will like the way we present it,  
on a platter, too good to be true  
you will find yourself caught without intending to be.  
Half-truths served as main truth  
resulting to half results presented as full results.  
We will give you the full truth, but not fully  
(Whispers) 'Truth is, the budget process is inclusive  
for every citizen to give views Real truth,  
the process is inclusive  
but only to the parties  
interested in giving views for you.  
You are in the era of full truths

but told in half truths  
Therefore ask yourself,  
why should we set a date  
for public participation, privately?  
And if at all we have your best interest at heart...  
then why do the same stakeholders get info,  
separately?  
Welcome, it is here that we will give you vegetable  
rice  
while we eat pilau rice then if you complain  
we'll say be thankful at least you ate.  
However, for how long shall you live  
with these half-truths of at least?  
I don't know, answer that yourself  
This is a disease you have,  
and I hope you won't get someone to cure you.  
(whisper) Another Truth, we have a national budget,  
very comprehensive with a total figure of how much  
money it will cost.  
Real truth, we created this budget with no money.  
They are just mere figures and projections  
for where we will get the money,  
It's like this, we the owners of the country  
have decided to burden you the citizen  
with the task of raising funds for the budget.  
next time fuel prices increase overnight  
don't be alarmed know you are taking care of the  
budget  
Ah! Ah! Sorry, Are you showering with cold water  
because token prices have gone up?,  
we are getting budget funds for you.  
And on labour day if we increase your salary  
somewhat,  
know that we want to put you in a higher tax bracket  
so you can give us more returns.  
Do the math!, sorry, let us do the math for you.  
I mean when money to pay salaries  
is more than development funds,  
aren't there areas where the tax payer hurts?.  
Sacred citizen excuse yourself  
for every personal budget  
you will have to deduct half  
and with the other half fund the country's budget  
which will be working on your behalf.  
But we're not promising anything But for now, enjoy  
your meal.

27. Listen to the poem! ▶



## Mimi ni nani?

**Matthew Na Chindo**

(ZAMBIA)

Mimi ni nani?

Pua yangu haijui jinsi ya kunuka harufu  
Lugha yangu inafunikwa kwa kweli, haki  
Kwa maana ninasema ni nini haki  
Ninazungumza kwa haki zangu  
Ninazungumza kwa wale wanaozungumza  
na kinywa kilichofungwa,  
Mimi kua ubaguzi kwa kutumia bunduki  
ya upendo, usawa  
Ninakataa kulisha haki zangu zimeoza kimya,  
Kutoa nje ni chakula pekee haki zangu zitakula,  
Ninawaambia mamlaka kuwaheshimu wa-  
nawake kwa kuwapa  
51% Uwakilishi katika Bunge

Mimi ni nani?

Mimi hupanda kelele nzuri wakati  
Unanipiga kwa udongo wa kimya  
Kwangu;  
Unyanyapaa wako ni kama impala,  
Na mimi ni kama simba, haiwezi kuitingisha  
Mimi ni nani?

Mimi ni nani?

Juu ya ardhi hii ya haki.  
Ambapo unyanyasaji wa kijinsia ni mshambu-  
liaji  
wa mauti.  
Nilichagua kucheza kwa haki za binadamu  
kama mlinzi,  
Kwa hiyo  
Mimi kuzuia, mimi huzuni.  
Mimi hasira, mimi hasira.  
Ninamzuia, unyanyasaji wa kijinsia  
kutoka kubaka kwa kipaji wetu;  
Wasichana wadogo,  
Kwa jina langu ni mwanamke!  
Mwanamke mwenye nguvu!

## Who am I?

**Matthew Na Chindo**

(ZAMBIA)

*My nose knows not how to smell inequality  
My tongue is covered with truth, justice  
For I speak what is right  
I speak for my rights  
I speak for those who speak with a closed mouth,  
“shush”  
I kill discrimination using the gun of love, equality  
“shush”  
I refuse to feed my rights rotten silence, “shush”  
Voicing out is the only food my rights shall eat,  
I tell authorities to honor women by giving them  
51 % representation in Parliament,  
Who am I ?*

*I germinate into good noise when you burry me in  
selfish silent soils  
You call me sinful silly shameful-senseless sarcastic  
surnames,  
aka stigma,  
To me;  
Your stigma is but an impala,  
And I am lioness, it can't shake me  
Who Am I?*

*Who Am I?*

*On this unfair ground  
Where sexual violence is a deadly striker  
I chose to play for Human Rights as a defender,  
So  
I block, I disturb  
I anger, I irritate  
I prevent him, sexual violence  
from raping our goalkeepers;  
young girls,  
For I am a strong woman,  
wanting to be protected by the referee; Justice.  
I am a strong woman!*

28. Listen to the poem! ►

# Zijue ujitetee

Suphiani Athumani  
(TANZANIA)

Umeelezwa kwanini,  
wewe ni mtu muhimu,  
Uwe yatima kundini, unazo zako hukumu,  
Ziwe mali miongoni, unalo fungu sehemu,  
Hukuachwa upwekeni,  
uteketee kwa damu,  
Haki zako mwanamke, zijue ujitetee.

Una haki kwenye mali, na kumiliki mafao,  
Tena uelewe kweli, nafasi kwa yako ngao,  
Mahari kwako halali, havina hoja vikao,  
Ndio pendo la Jalali, halizui mshangao,  
Haki zako mwanamke, zijue ujitetee.

Jielewe toka leo, uzijue zako haki,  
Mirathi ivue ndweo, fungu lako lihakiki,  
Mola kakupamba cheo, uepuke unafiki,  
Mwanamke matokeo, elimu ni yako haki,  
Haki zako mwanamke, zijue ujitetee.

Una haki ya kurithi, kuolewa na talaka,  
Usipumbaze hadithi,  
kwa wingi wa takataka,  
Mume akiwa dayuthi, muepuke kadhalika,  
Hadhi yako ya mirathi, usiitie mashaka,

Haki zako mwanamke, zijue ujitetee.  
Hujakatazwa lafudhi, kuchangia mpya hoja,  
Umbile lako ni hadhi, jihifadhi maramoja,  
Usichoke jihifadhi, ni haki yako umoja,  
Shiriki yalo baadhi, zisikuzidi lahaja,  
Haki zako mwanamke, zijue ujitetee.

Una haki ya maisha, uongozi ikibidi,  
Ni wewe namaanisha, usipumbae zawadi,  
Ni haki yako maisha, ishi kwenye itikadi,  
Usiache swali isha, huna haja choma udi,  
Haki zako mwanamke, zijue ujitetee.

Ni haki yako adhwimu, ya wewe kuheshimiwa,  
Kuthaminiwa nidhamu, utu wako kuujuwa,  
Jielewe utadumu, ni mjukuu wa Hawa,  
Tembea toa salamu, usiuchoke usawa,  
Haki zako mwanamke, zijue ujitetee.

Una haki ya elimu, jielewe mwanamke,  
Kusoma ndio nidhamu, kuukimbia upweke,  
Usichoke jifahamu, shuleni usibweteke,  
Zinduka shika elimu, uwe shujaa utoke,  
Haki zako mwanamke, zijue ujitetee.





# Know them and defend yourself

Suphiani Athumani

(TANZANIA)

Were you told why,  
you are an important person,  
You could be an orphan  
in a group,  
you still have your dues,  
Even if it a part of some wealth,  
you have a share somewhere,  
You were not abandoned,  
to be forsaken in blood,

Woman your Rights,  
know them and defend yourself.  
You have a right to the wealth,  
and to own assets,  
Further understand  
your place truly,  
for it is your shield,  
Dowry is rightfully yours,  
no meetings needed upon't,  
Indeed love is majestic,  
no surprises there,  
Woman your Rights,  
know them and defend yourself.

From henceforth know yourself,  
so as to know your rights,  
Remove the pomp from your  
inheritance and ensure to audit  
your share,

God adorned you with prestige,  
to ward you against hypocrisy,  
And the outcome, lady,  
is that education is yours by right,  
Woman your Rights,  
know them and defend yourself.

You have a right to inherit,  
to get married and divorced,  
Do not dumb down the narrative,  
by multiplying rubbish,  
If the husband  
does not see you value,  
give him a wide berth,  
Doubt not your place of being a  
righthful heir,  
Woman your Rights,  
know them and defend yourself.

Your accent is not a hindrance,  
to participating in new issues,  
Your gender is a quality,  
preserve your dignity,  
Tire not of preserving yourself,  
inclusion is your right,  
Do not be overwhelmed by jargon,  
go ahead and participate,  
Woman your Rights,  
know them and defend yourself.

You have a right to life a  
nd even leadership,  
Yes I mean you,  
do not be fooled beloved,  
Life is your right,  
live within the ideology,  
Do not give up the question  
and stay the course with faith,  
Woman your Rights,  
know them and defend yourself.

It is your glorious right,  
for you to be respected,  
To be esteemed with respect, t  
o know your humanity,  
Know yourself, you are eternal,  
descendant of Eve,  
Move and speak freely,  
do not tire of equality,  
Woman your Rights,  
know them and defend yourself.

You have a right to education,  
know yourself woman,  
With rigour in education  
you will escape alienation  
Know yourself and never tire,  
do not slumber in school  
Awake and grab education,  
be brave and go out,  
Woman your Rights,  
know them and defend yourself

29. Listen to the poem!



# Utetezi sio kazi, utetezi ni hali

Young Okolla

(KENYA)

Mbona nisisimame maovu yakitawala?  
Kwanini nikimye Dhuluma zikienea?  
wanasema utetezi sio kazi, nimekubali.  
Ya nini kazi kama nadhulumiwa?

Ya nini kazi kama nadhulumiwa,  
Nadhulumiwa kwa sababu ya umri.  
wanasema mimi ni mdogo  
kujieleza na kujisimamia  
Lazima niwe na mvi ndio nitambulike.

lazima niwe na mvi ndio nitambulike.  
hajalishi mimi ni wa jinsia gani.  
Mke ama mme au nikikosa mwelekeo  
wa kijinsia naweza jitetea.  
Kwa kutangamana na #StayWithDefenders

Kwa kutangamana na #StayWithDefenders  
pasi kuongelea utaiwa wangu au wako  
ni lazima tutashinda dhuluma zote  
zinazotukumba  
haki lazima itatendeka kwetu

haki lazima itatendeka kwetu  
sio kwetu tu! bali ata kwa wengine wote.  
wadogo kwa wakubwa, wazee kwa vijana  
Atimaye tumepata ukumbi wa kujieleza

Atimaye tumepata ukumbi wa kujieleza  
Kujieleza na kuelezana makuu  
tunayotenda kama watetezi  
Utetezi sio kazi ndiposa hatulipwi.  
Utetezi ni hali yetu kila siku

Utetezini hali yetu kila siku  
sokoni, nyumbani na kanisani  
kila mahali tutasimamia haki  
kwa upamoja au ubinafsi

kwa upamoja au ubinafsi  
kikatiba na kiimani  
lazima haki idumu  
kwangu na kwa jirani

Kwangu na kwa jirani  
tutashikana kwa pamoja  
ili kubadilisha hali za dhuluma tunazopitia  
tukikandamizwa kwa kukosa pesa

tukikandamizwa kwa kukosa pesa  
tukitafuta huduma za kiserekali  
wanasema ni chai au kitu kidogo  
nami ntajibu nimebeba ugali ya haki

nami ntajibu nimebeba ugali ya haki  
rushwa sirushi na hongo sitoi  
siwezizi simama maovu yakitawala  
**UTETEZI SIO KAZI, UTETEZI NI HALI**



# Advocacy is not a job, advocacy is a state of being

Young Okolla

(KENYA)

Why should I not stand when evil reigns?  
Why should I shut up when oppression spreads?  
They say advocacy is not a job, I agree.  
What is a job for if I am being ripped off?

What is a job for if I am being ripped off,  
I am being ripped off because of age.  
they say I am too young to speak  
for myself and defend myself  
I must have grey hair to be recognised

I must have grey hair to be recognised.  
My gender matters not.  
Female or male or if I don't have gender  
orientation still I can defend myself.  
By uniting with #StayWithDefenders

By uniting with #StayWithDefenders  
without speaking of mine or your nationality  
We will vanquish all oppression that batters us  
Justice for us will prevail

Justice for us will prevail  
not us only! But even to all others.  
big and small, young and old  
We finally have a platform to express ourselves

We finally have a platform to express ourselves  
To express ourselves and to tell each other  
of the great things we do as defenders  
Advocacy is not work, we are not paid.  
Advocacy is our being, daily.

Advocacy is our being, daily  
at the market, at home and in Church  
everywhere we will stand up for rights  
together or individually

together or individually  
constitutionally and faithfully  
rights must be eternal  
to me and to my neighbour

to me and to my neighbour  
we will hold each other  
to change conditions of oppression we travers  
as we are trodded upon for not having money

as we are trodded upon for not having money  
while seeking governmental services  
they say it's for tea or something small  
I will answer I am carrying a meal of rights

I will answer I am carrying a meal of rights  
graft I grant not and bribes I do not give  
I cannot stay still when evil reigns  
ADVOCACY IS NOT A JOB,  
ADVOCACY IS A STATE OF BEING

30 • Listen to the poem! ▶





# Nightmare

Henry Raby

(UNITED KINGDOM)

Last night I dreamed  
Louise Michel was standing next to me  
She raised aloft a flag  
and shouted Vive Le Liberty  
I wanted to stand and fight beside her  
But she was on the other side of a border  
I guess that when I wake up,  
I should find some work  
As long as what I do doesn't cause hurt.  
I could find a safe job checking passports  
Or I could find a job checking trucks at the  
ports

Investigating Visas to match the stats demands  
I could get a job locking humans into vans  
Or burning down the Calais Camps  
Planes, handcuffs, detention centres.

I hope the human race can do so much better  
I know the human race can do so much better

Or: Give yourself to the nightmare  
At least you are a citizen of somewhere  
Salaries and sleep-walking

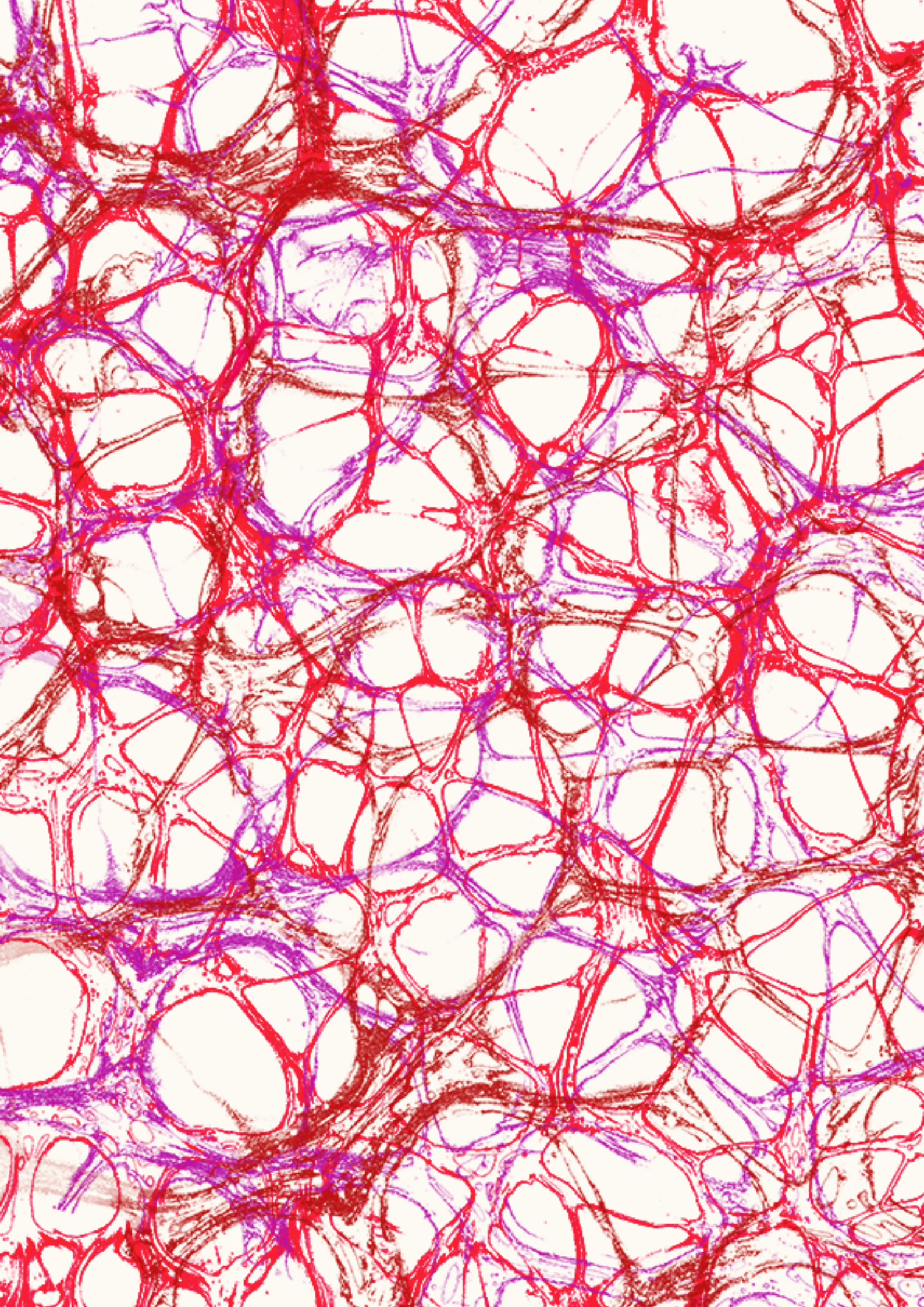
What's that language you're talking?  
All these years and what's to show?  
Eat your dreams, spit out the bones  
Build a wall then build it higher  
Take a life and make it harder  
It's just another nine-to-five  
Do what you do to survive

Green and pleasant gangrene cliffs  
Fortress payslip  
Just follow orders

Red red waters at the borders.

If you don't want dreams  
will you settle for nightmares?

Last night I dreamed  
the human race was standing next to me  
We were splashing silently  
by the side of a cold sea  
I wanted a pat on the back,  
shake a hand, reach just a simple touch  
But when I tried to paddle,  
there was a body on the beach.



## *Defiende tu sangre*

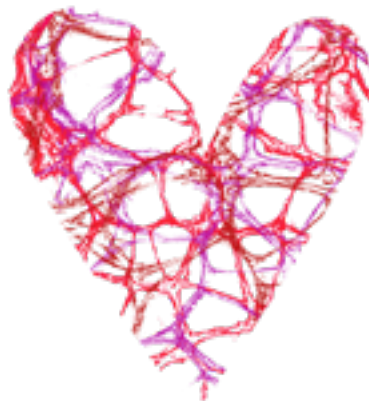
**Rosa Chávez**  
(GUATEMALA)

Defiende tu sangre  
porque desemboca en tu corazón  
defiende tu cuerpo  
porque allí anidan tus palpitaciones  
defiende tu espíritu  
porque sin este tu corazón se vuelve  
nada  
defiéndete a ti y a los tuyos  
a ti porque eres los tuyos  
a los tuyos porque son tú corazón  
por eso te repito:  
defiende tu sangre  
defiende tu corazón.

## *Defend your blood*

**Rosa Chávez**  
(GUATEMALA)

*Defend your blood  
because it flows into your heart  
defend your body  
because your palpitations nest there  
defend your spirit  
because without this your heart becomes nothing  
defend yourself and your own  
because you are your people  
defend your people because they are your heart  
that's why I repeat  
defend your blood  
defend your heart.*



# Meet the poets

*Yewande Akinse*

NIGERIA

*Awake*

Yewande Akinse is a Nigerian lawyer, storyteller, poet and author of two collections of poems titled *'A tale of being, of green and of ing'* (2019) and *'Voices: A collection of poems that tell stories'* (2016). Her poems have appeared in Afritondo, Trampset, Galleyway, Lumiere Review, Floodlight Poetry and elsewhere.

*Wietzke Merison*

THE NETHERLANDS

*Justice Today*

Wietzke Merison is a young artist from the Netherlands who strongly believes in the power of art to contribute to transformative and positive change. She is a part of the Islamic art foundation, *'Salaam Art'*, who strive for inner and outer peace (*'salaam'* in Arabic) through the means of art. She has studied (Islamic) theology and international human rights law and has worked as a voluntary legal advisor for refugees in the Netherlands.

*Asiem Sanyal*

INDIA

*Fearless Fish Out of Water*

Asiem Sanyal is an Indian marine biologist, itinerant and intrepid traveller. On different islands around the world, he has worked at the intersection of ecosystem health and sustainable livelihoods for coastal communities. He is a strong advocate for women's inclusion in decision-making within these communities, most of which continue to have systems rooted in patriarchy.

*Naro*

PHILIPPINES

*No Dust Will Settle in EDSA*

Naro Alonzo is a *'tagahabi'* or *'story weaver'* for KERI: Caring for Activists, a Filipino grassroots collective that provides psychosocial support to social justice defenders in the Philippines. Naro also studies clinical psychology at the University of the Philippines.

*Salome Nduta*

KENYA

*Changing the world with a smile*

Salome Nduta is a dedicated woman human rights defender (WHRD) from Kenya. She is the current coordinator of the Women Defenders Hub, an alumni member of the Global Change Leaders program of Coady Institute in Canada and was an organising committee member for the global conference celebrating the 20th anniversary of the United Nations Security Council's Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

*Chaco de la Pitoreta*

HONDURAS

*Trecientas sesenta palabras por la vida (por Berta Cáceres)*

Chaco de la Pitoreta is a Honduran lawyer, poet, photographer, and independent journalist. He is the director of the ApoyArte Cultural Educational Foundation and is the founder of the Colectivo Cultural Atrapados en Azul. His writing has appeared in Latino Rebels, Radio Progreso & ERIC-SJ, and his artistic works have appeared in various anthologies. He is the producer of the program *"Desde el Acantilado"* and organizer of the event *"Encuentro de la espera infinita"*.

*Marisa López Diz*

SPAIN

*Tengo derecho a estar aquí*

Marisa López Diz is an artist and secondary education teacher from Gijón, Spain. She holds a degree in Hispanic philology. She writes poetry and narrative for children and adults, has several published books and more than fifty literary awards. She writes and creates short films and is part of the musical duo *Mestura*, for which she writes her own compositions. She was also a volunteer and later a monitor and trainer for the Red Cross.



Diana Cristina  
Galeano Casadiego

COLOMBIA

28 de abril

Diana Cristina Galeano Casadiego is a Colombian artist with a degree in social sciences and is a contributing author for Ita Editorial. When asked to describe herself, she replied: “Vivo en la tierra del realismo mágico y por mis venas corre la misma América de Eduardo. Mi hogar son las letras y mi profesión la palabra,” which roughly translates to, “I live in the land of magical realism and Eduardo’s America runs through my veins. My home is the letters and my profession is words.”

María Antonia  
Jiménez Estrada

MEXICO

Canción

María Antonia Jiménez Estrada was born in Córdoba, Veracruz, Mexico. Her work appears in the following anthologies: *Escritores de Tierra Adentro II*; *Raudal de Palabras*; *Versarias, ondinias y bucaneras*; *Centinelas de la Tierra*; *Mariposa II*, Premio Mundial de Micros Poe; and *77 Brujas*. She has also written the children’s books *La Bella Mulata de Córdoba* and *Los Caracolitos*.

María del Campo

URUGUAY

A quienes le temen los molinos

María Monica del Campo is a Uruguayan artist and mother of three children. She has worked in international non-governmental organisations and is the founder of Umuntu, a disability inclusion consultancy. When asked to describe herself, she replied, “Como tercera de doce hermanos, aprendí que somos con los demás, no a pesar de ellos. Respiré el diálogo dar-recibir,” which roughly translates to, “As the third of twelve siblings, I learned that we are with others, not in spite of them. I breathed the give-receive dialogue.”

Gabrielle Favre

FRANCE

Je n’ai plus le droit d’être un homme  
(dans l’hiver allemand de 1943)

Gabrielle Favre is a French poet from Loire. Her first novel “Regulation” was published by Douro in July 2021.

Emmanuel Brasseur

CANADA

Nul ne doit

Emmanuel Brasseur is a French-Canadian artist and author who was born in Bordeaux, France and has also lived in Canada and the United States. His creations are multidisciplinary, and he works to manipulate words, musical notes, tones and images in new and surprising ways. His pieces are typically imprinted with paintings, collages, photography, poetry and music. He is also an art and French language teacher.

Emilie Bruguère

FRANCE

Le pantalon à plis

Emilie Bruguère is a French author, director and actress. Her texts emanate deeper and more subtle tones, delicate variations of our daily life, where the insignificant is elevated over the clouds. She explores the innumerable ways of delivering poetry, through public performances such as “Après dimanche il est dimanche”, publishes poetic chronicles and produces video poems for the “Journal d’une Impatience”.

Note about the poem “The pleated trousers”: For several years, the island of Lesbos, in Greece, which hosts many migrants, has been the scene of tensions and violent clashes. This poem retraces the exile and bears witness to the sad absurdity of a ruined destiny.

Ruth Rose  
Evemb’a Ndito

CAMEROON

Épistolaire de l’humaine  
humanité à l’homme

Ruth Rose Evemb’a Ndito is a Cameroonian doctoral student enrolled in the department of political science at the University of Yaoundé. She is passionate about poetry, and is the winner of several international poetry competitions and the co-author of anthologies. Her experience in the field of human rights is closely linked with the Cameroonian Red Cross and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

Épiphanie Dionrang

CHAD

Tambour des silences

Nodjikoua Épiphanie Dionrang is an Chadian artist, social entrepreneur, feminist and human rights activist. She is a project manager *Justicier du Sahel* where she works on INKHAZ, a health platform for the fight against gender-based violence. She has been named a gender champion by Oxfam, is the president of the Chadian league for women’s rights, which is a network of feminists who fight against sexual and gender-based violence, and she is also the country coordinator of the Network of Young Feminists in Central Africa.

## Maria de Fátima Ribeiro Soares

BRAZIL

Balas para Quatro Meninas

Maria de Fátima Ribeiro Soares is a Brazilian poet and activist. This poem, based on real events, was born out of indignation at police violence against popular communities in Brazil. The “war on crime”, in practice against the most vulnerable populations, victimizes children. The “balas perdidas” or “stray bullets” destroy peace and deprive children of their right to life.

## Tamires Fernanda Baptista Frasson

BRAZIL

Poesia (?) pelos/dos Direitos Humanos no Brasil

Tamires Frasson is a journalist, teacher, poet and pursuing a Master’s degree in Education in Brazil. She works as an educator through public and private networks. In 2016, she founded *Coletivo Liter Ocupa*, in Jaú, São Paulo, with the aim of encouraging reading and facilitating access to literature and poetic art. She is also the author of the book *Das inconformidades do cotidiano - poesias, versos e relatos* which was published independently in 2019. Tamires seeks to bring social, political and personal themes into her poetry.

## Samuel Lourenço Filho

BRAZIL

Ninguém é de aço,  
é normal o cansaço

Samuel Lourenço Filho is a former prisoner from Rio de Janeiro. He participates in projects that help inmates and ex-convicts in the resumption of life outside prison walls. He teaches reading and writing to those that have been incarcerated or who are currently incarcerated.

## Maria Ribeiro

BRAZIL

Oração

Maria Ribeiro is a Brazilian poet and member of the *Coletivo Margens Clínicas*, where she coordinates trainings for public officials in the areas of health, education and social assistance, specifically to explain the psychological suffering caused by the violence of a neo-colonial state. She is also a graduate school professor teaching humanities and rights at the University of São Paulo.

## Rafael Zãn

BRAZIL

Prece

Rafael Zãn is a Brazilian poet and activist. At the time of the construction of the Belo Monte hydroelectric plant, Rafael’s family was forced to leave the house where they had lived their entire lives. This is when he began to notice the systematic human rights violations taking place. He started to participate in the “*Movimento dos Atingidos por Barragens*” group, taking many actions so that the rights of other populations impacted by large projects are not denied.

## Songphon Sonthirak

THAILAND

คนบ้าที่กล้าฝัน

Songphon Sonthirak, nicknamed Ball, pen name “Yajai”, is a Thai artist who is now in his fifth year of studying law at Khon Kaen University. He has participated in activities reflecting social problems with Talufa group.

## Mek Krueng Fah

THAILAND

โปรดจำไว้.. เราต่างอยู่ข้างเธอ

Writing under the pen name Mek Krueng Fah, the author does not define himself as a poet. Rather, he has been interested in politics since age 15, after witnessing the dissolution of the Red Shirts rally in 2010 and the 2014 coup. He then began to write and perform his own poems in various protests and public gatherings to oppose the military dictatorship.

## Hatairatt Jaturawatana

THAILAND

ความเป็นมนุษย์

Hatairatt Jaturawatana is a blind artist who started writing poetry after losing her sight. She has published three books, one of which, *Every Clear Moment that Touches Your Heart*, is shortlisted for the Southeast Asian Writers Award. She writes poetry to spread love, hope and peace to fellow human beings.

Prachya Pongpanich

THAILAND

Fix

Prachya Pongpanich is a Thai poet and artist. He would like to communicate the following with his readers: "Thanks for reading my poem. I hope we would support each other to 'Fix' what needs to be fixed."

Jakraphong  
Sungchompan

THAILAND

แต่เขื่อนน้อย

Jakraphong Sungchompan is a native of Chiang Mai and a son of Tone. He enjoys classical music, drawing and poetry. He believes that the whole world is a stage where all people are players who have their own entrances and exits, and one should think carefully before deciding to do something because what has already been done cannot be returned.

Ayub Linford  
Nyanchongi

KENYA

Haki ni mkanda

Linford Ayub graduated as an English language teacher in 2019. Writing has been her passion since childhood but she officially started writing in 2020. Her poems and articles have been published in various books and magazines. Linford uses her writing as a voice for the weak, as a mirror of society to symbolize the evils that occur in the hope that her words will have the potential to transform society.

Martin Mwangi

KENYA

Ukweli kamili

Martin Mwangi is a Kenyan spoken word artist that focuses on positive social change. His pieces range from issues concerning extra judicial killings to good governance. He addresses these issues with the hope that the society will learn and change for the better. Previously, he has worked with organisations like Pawa 254 and Amnesty International Kenya.

Matthew Na Chindo

ZAMBIA

Mimi ni nani?

Chindo Na Matthew is a multi-lingual poet, actor, screenwriter and beatboxer. He also holds a degree in social work from the University of Zambia (UNZA). Chindo is a two-time poetry slam champion for the prestigious People's Action for Accountability and Good Governance in Zambia (PAAGZ -2021) and Word Smash Poetry (2020). In 2019, he won the "UNZA has got talent" Award for the best beatboxer of the year. Chindo believes that poetry can change the world and he hopes to inspire young people to challenge injustice by speaking truth to power.

Suphiani Athumani

TANZANIA

Zijue ujitetee

Suphiani Athumani Almasi is a Tanzanian artist from the village of Muheza, Tanga. His passions are playing football, watching movies and writing poems. He is also a geography and English teacher at a secondary school in Muheza.

Young Okolla

KENYA

Utetezi sio kazi, utetezi ni hali

Zamazama Okolla is a young husband, a father, a community organizer and a human rights activist using liberation theology as a tool for positive social change.

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Thank

You

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