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INTRODUCTION

‘Fly Between the Lines’ was a project delivered by You Press with the aim to discuss social issues that affect young people around the neighbouring boroughs of Westminster, Camden and the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea through the aid of storytelling and poetry.

The creative writing programme was delivered in three core workshops during the summer and involved working with a cohort of bright young minds to express themselves artistically.

Our facilitators and volunteers supported the young writers by providing a variety of exercises in each session to help them to produce conscious pieces that explored concerns and problems that may be present in their communities.

This anthology celebrates the hard work, determination and commitment of each writer to make sure **‘Fly Between the Lines’** was a successful project.

PROJECT AIMS

1

The aim of our project was to give young people the opportunity to express themselves creatively through storytelling and poetry.

2

We aimed to not only promote social inclusiveness but to also give young people the confidence to communicate to a wider audience.

3

'Fly Between the Lines' promotes recreational writing and gave each young person the chance to be inspired by other creatives.

At the end of the project we inspired the young people to continue their artistic expression and to promote social cohesion as they continue to grow into citizens of London and the United Kingdom.

Like every other project hosted by You Press, together we established five group values that everyone would abide by for the duration of the project.



GROUP VALUES

Perseverance to Achieve

Respect

Openness

Team Work

Fun



THEMES

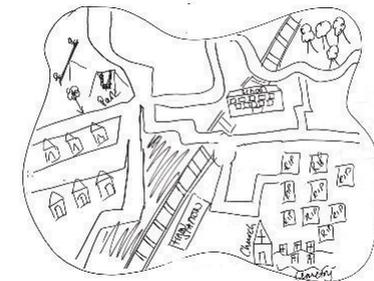
The group discussed themes and ideas revolving around social issues. Our facilitator Jemilea helped the participants develop characters that they could write about in the last core workshop.



POWER	CONFLICT / IDENTITY
SURVIVAL	BULLYING
FAMILY	CONFUSION
FRIEND	BELONGING
OVERCOMING HARD TIMES	WAR
ABANDONED BY A FATHER	UNITY
DIGNITY	ISOLATION
RESPECT	LOYALTY
DESTRUCTION	ACCEPTANCE
	LOW SELF-ESTEEM

Each unique character had to be put into a scene setting scenario that included one or more of the themes and ideas that we talked about!

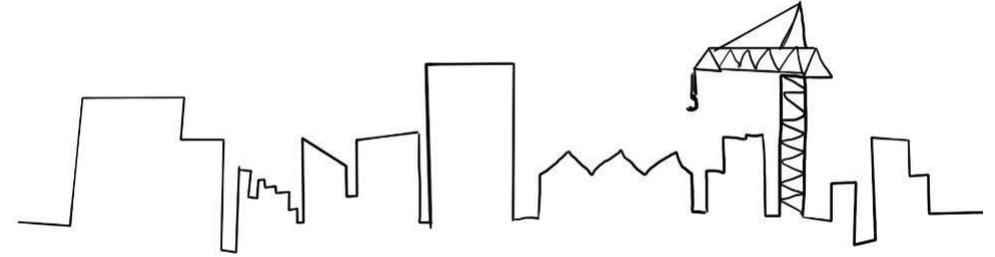
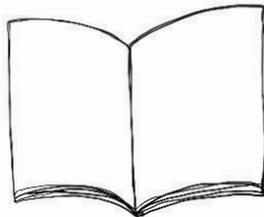
Writers were given a chance to set the scene for their stories by drawing a visual map for their characters to explore.



JAMIE



Jamie is a 15 year old writer who enjoys reading fiction and stories within a variety of genres



From my bedroom window I can see
flats across the street being built,

a shadow of the cranes moving along
the side of the building,

a bridge with tiny ants of people
scurrying across and touching the side
of the sparkling canal.

I smell my mum making toast,

the sweet butter in the air and sizzling
bacon and sausages on the grill.

I hear my mum getting off the leather
sofa,

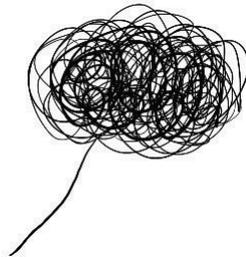
the toaster popping and the TV just out
of range to hear what is being said.

Dear mental health,

The way you vary in people is causing a lot of problems with people. People are becoming depressed; some are sociopaths and others are going to the extreme of suicide due to tipping forwards. The illness and negative side to you. We need you to stop with this favouritism over people you feel deserve to live happily and who doesn't.

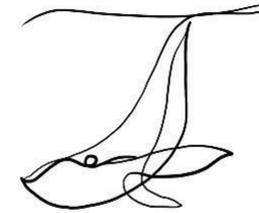
Yours Sincerely,

Jamie



A SCHOOL OF WHALES

(NEWSPAPER ACCOUNT)



“Quiet little one” I whispered, annoyed and cautious of Mia’s insistent chatter. She loved to sing but now wasn’t the time. The killers were always listening, trying to get a hold of her. My Mia, my daughter. “When can I talk again?”, Mia was getting restless but we were almost there. We had already been attacked last week so we knew they were behind us, listening for our calls. Two days travel and we were there. I hope we can make it for Mia’s sake and her mother’s.

As we rose for air, I saw something slither into the darkness, a black dorsal fin followed by another. A tail. I dove back down to investigate leaving Mia with the others, I was the only male so it was up to me to protect the school.



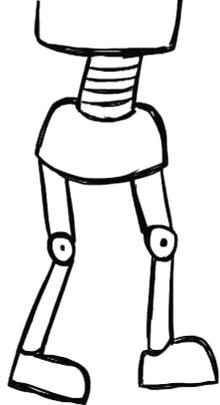
I am life and death
I am perfection and imperfection
I am balance
I am a cycle
I am existent yet non existent
I am remembered
I am forgotten
I am my family
I am the sea, sand and the waves
I am never ending
I am young
I am old\I am true
I am false
I am myself
I am finite
I am me
I am myself\I am who I AM

Altair stared out into the orange light awakening from the deep sleep of the night before and watched as his father left him with the others once again. Perfect balls of patterns flew past the window separating the warm room from the cold abyss. Shadows drifted from the bed leading up to the heart of the room. A steady beating behind the thick trunks of the cupboard decorated with the native flower of the bladed isles. The orcal, the twisting vines wrapping around the doors leading to the handles of heavy gold, the only colour in the room. His father's bed covered with the hide of the bear he killed protecting his mother. His father had been six when his ability had shown. Making him the strongest the family had seen. Altair crept across the soft flooring, an imitation of the fields of the highlands. He moved his hand closer to the cold, smooth handles as his heartbeat echoed louder and louder in his ears. He grasped it and pain shot up his arm as he collapsed onto the floor an image of a girl coming to his mind.

Her hair flowed behind her like a river of chocolate flowing into a lake of golden caramel, with glowing red lights either side of her. Her perfect lips so welcoming but forbidden from his touch only accessible to the winds faint touch. That locket seemed so familiar, every now and then glittering, reflecting the light incomparable to her smile. A single flash lit up the room. She hid it well but he knew it was doubly as beautiful than any other he had seen. Eyes like his own, lakes of green with hints of golden brown always tempting and challenging him to come closer, calling him across the room. Her eyes knew what she didn't dare admit...

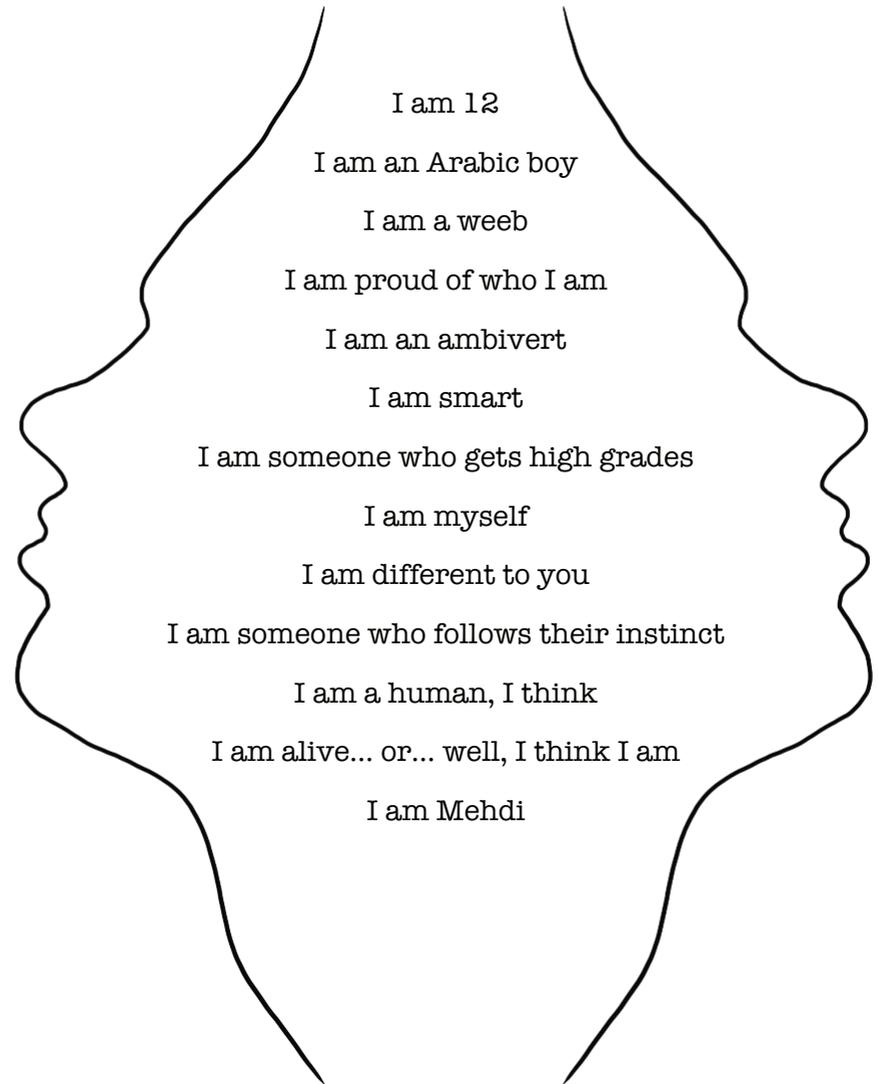
What he too knew and felt the same towards her. Two destined to be together but never reaching far enough to skim that point, he felt it the most and that's why it hurt him more when she didn't say it back.

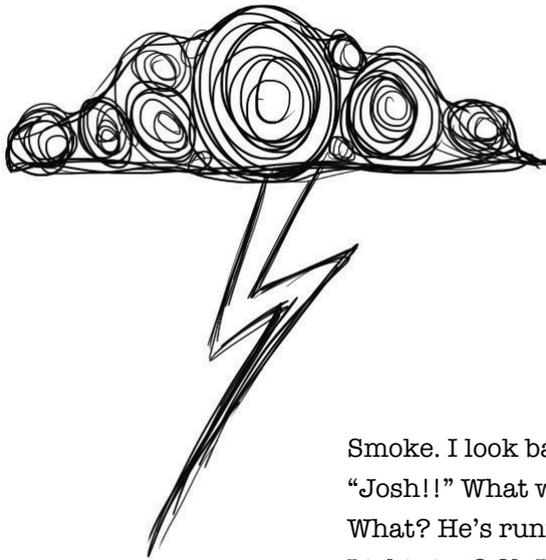
MEHDI



Hi, my name is Mehdi, I am 12 years old and I am a Muslim human boy who really likes anime. There is a chance that I'm not human though.

Who knows?





Smoke. I look back. Josh? Josh! I run.
“Josh!!” What was that? Minotour. Wait.
What? He’s running for me. I run away.
Lightning? Oh Lord lightning hit him!
Who’s that? A goat man? He looks worried.
He grabbed me and is pulling me.

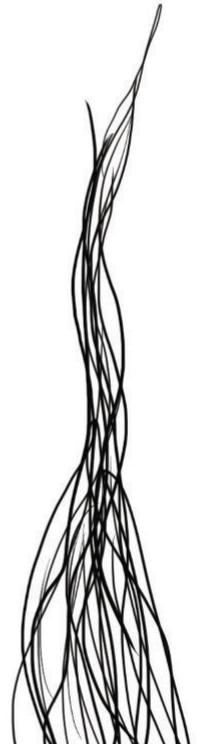
“That’s a monster! I’ll save you! I’ll take
you to...”

I ignored the rest of what he said. Josh, was
all that I could think about. I should have
saved him, not ran. I looked back at the
dead monster and at the burning house. I
fainted.

I woke up. My small finger and ring finger of
my right hand are missing but I don’t care.
My hand and head bandaged. Josh, I lost
everything. I will never see him again. I
promise to get revenge.

My mother must die. All those visits where she
came, abused me and told me she hated me.
Revenge, she doesn’t deserve to live. Josh was
the only person who was ever kind to me.
Everyone else detested me. He saw beyond me
being adopted, made me feel included in a
family that was not my own. My protector.

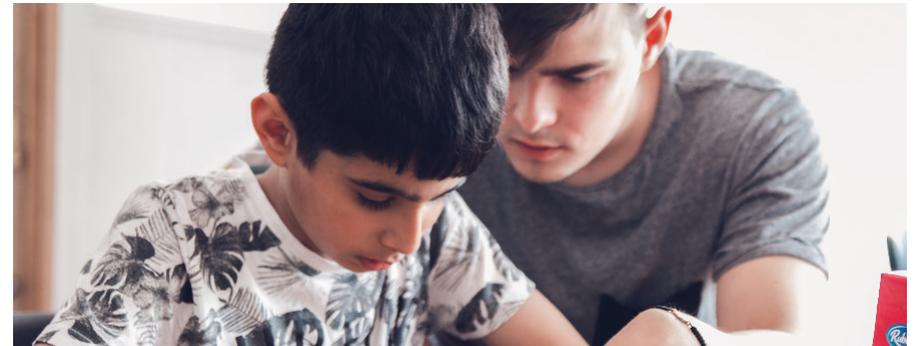
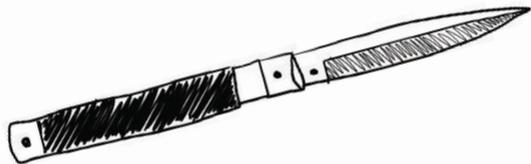
The goat man claiming the name of Trover was
yelling, “Run, Will, run the giant wants to eat
you!” He told me I am a demi-god. He took me to
a place called camp Half-blood and a trident and
skull and lightning bolt signs appeared above
my head. I saw a cavalryman. No, a centaur. He
told me the signs meant I am a child of Zeus,
Poseidon and Hades. I was confused. He said 20
years ago the titan lord Kronos invaded
Olympus, the three primordial gods fused into
one to defeat him. They were stuck and they
had a child with a mortal. That mortal was my
mother and when they managed to un-fuse they
left. I was told that I was counsellor for all three
cabins and I was important. I was given a knife;
it was gold on the handle but the blade was
black apart from a turquoise line in the middle
of the blade. I was only 12 and very confused. I
found scissors that I put powers in and took
another weapon. When Kronos came back the
next year it was I who defeated him, again and
alone.



Dear Knife Crime,

No one likes you. You have killed thousands a year, I hate your guts even though you don't have guts as you're a social issue. Go die! You're a friend to gangs but an enemy to the world. You're disgusting. A disgrace. You even threatened me before. In fact. It was just yesterday. I hate you. I don't bully people but you're a social issue. Leave us alone, never return. You're an exile.

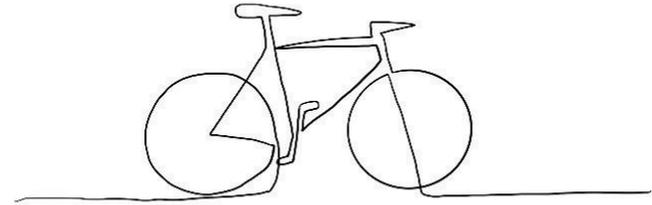
Medhi



HUSSAIN



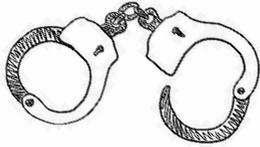
Hi my name is Hussain. I am 11-years old (almost 12!). I am a gamer and I enjoy watching anime.



Today at school something awful happened. I was caught in the middle of a war I did not understand. These guys are supposed to be my best friends. The 6 of us spent our lives growing up together. Like family, we used to talk to each other, support each other, like brothers, staying over at each other's houses. I remember us playing pranks on each other and riding our bikes in the park. What changed? I thought they were people I could trust but now I don't know what to think. The anger is boiling in my heart, overflowing in my head. I can't think straight. We had a pact of brotherhood that we would never harm each other, signed in blood. But today they were throwing insults at me in the playground, a pack of wolves hunting prey. For the first time I felt trapped. I felt alone and empty.

ANIMAL CRUELTY

(NEWSPAPER ACCOUNT)



Police Officer (Part 1):

Who would do something like that?! To something so small and innocent? It's no excuse that you are a psychopath. You have to control your urges.

The cat's fur was painted red with blood as 35 needles had to be removed from its body. After further examination, the vet told us that 53% of its bones were broken.

The owner is definitely going to prison. Animal cruelty is bad...and he needs to get that through his head. I just cannot believe somebody could do that.

Now that we've stopped him, the cat will recover and get a new owner but not a horrible one. Definitely not a horrible one! The cat has seen too much in its life. Way too much.

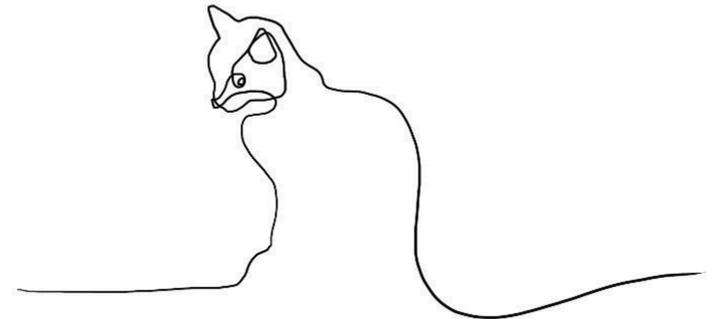
Psychopath Owner (Part 2):

I just couldn't believe that cats need so many things. But it's not my fault that I'm a psychopath and besides, that cat is so annoying.

It was great to see that cat suffer don't you think? To see it suffer brought me pleasure and you know how psychopaths have different minds...hurting animals made me feel better so there is no need to blame me, is there?

It's in my DNA. It's just so great to see it suffer and once I started, it never stopped.

I just kept on doing it.



I am 11 years old

I am a weeb

I am a gamer

I am a person who thinks

I am person who sleeps in the morning and not at night

I am always tired

I am a little clumsy

I am a risk-taker

I am happy

I am fearless

I am perceptive

I am bored

I am skinny

I am a swimmer

I am a science guy

I AM HUSSAIN

Dear Knife Crime,

I am writing a complaint letter to you.

People have been killing each other like animals.

This is all your fault and that's not acceptable.

People all over the world are doing this.

You have to stop this.

Stop people from losing control.

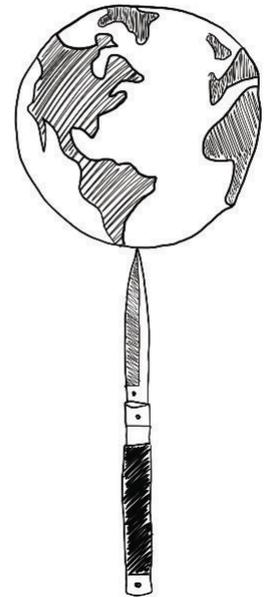
Because you started it,

you are going to end it.

Why would you do this anyway?

Sincerely,

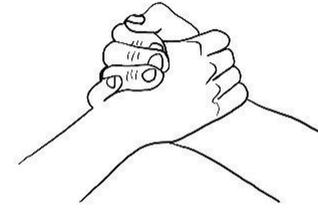
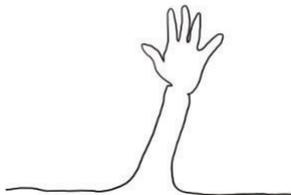
Hussain



IDRIS



Hey my name is Idris, currently I attend Ark Alton Academy. I enjoy sports, maths not so much. I enjoy anime and staying at home. Video games are all right but anime is better, so yeah, that's me.



Excitement, joy and happiness
Each one of these emotions
Coursing through my veins

The thought of seeing all my friends
Sends a chill
Rippling down my spine

Growing up I didn't have much family
Actually, none at all
Does that matter?

I'm happy to visit
After four years of struggling
It's finally time to connect
I've changed, I wonder how they have

Racism,

Why do you exist? For what reason do you thrive in discrimination. For what reason do you insist on driving us to the brink of destruction? In what world gives you the right to determine the happiness of someone's future by their race? Jobs, education and many other opportunities are inaccessible to some people just because you don't know your place. Your bias shouldn't have a say in this world or any other. From the dawn of man, you have manipulated us from the shadows; unseen. But now we stand in a new day and age, a new era. In which you have absolutely no right to judge, rule or even dream of controlling us. We will fight back. I'm writing to let you know. Contact me if you disagree.

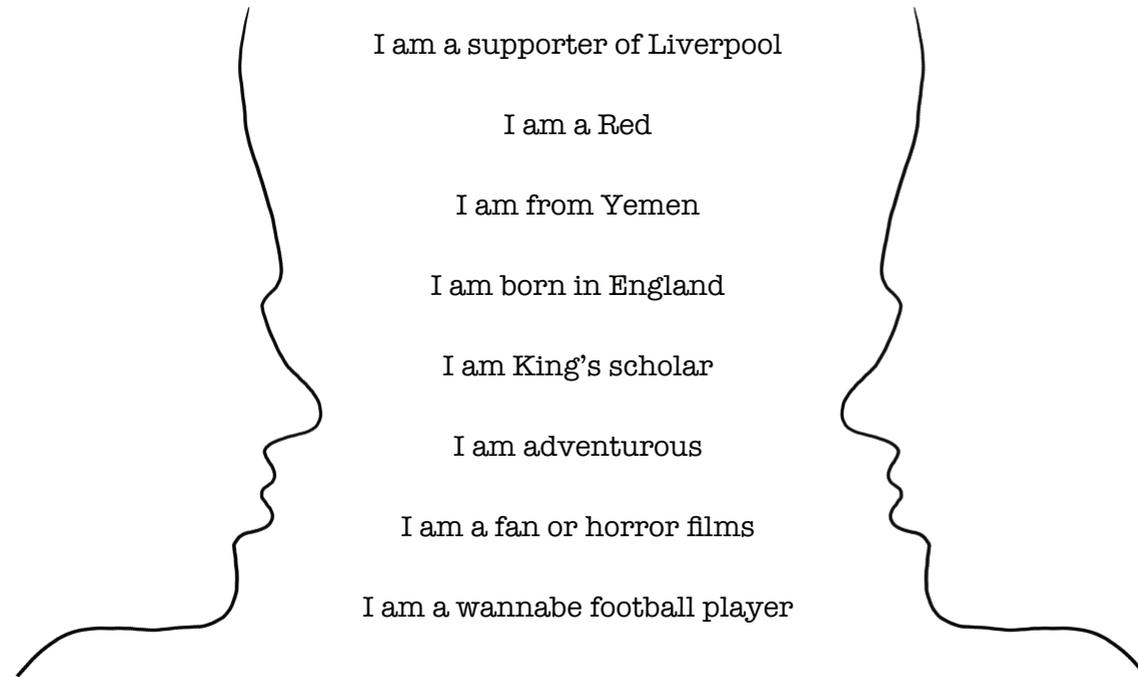
SALEH



This programme was an amazing experience as this will give me flashbacks when I'm older. I am Saleh, I enjoyed being a writer over here in You Press. I am a fan of Liverpool and I make videos of me playing football.



I woke up from the scariest dream ever. James is coming to kill me and my family. I don't want to die and especially my family. I love my family they've always cared about me. No matter what I've done in life they've raised me in the best way and I will always be grateful for them. I know that I can do things myself, they still care about me. They raised me. I am who I am because of them. All of them. Everyday I think about how I can take care of my younger brother. The dream of them being gone, how I could survive without them. I am not violent but I would go to the ends of the earth for them, put myself on the line to save them.



I am a supporter of Liverpool

I am a Red

I am from Yemen

I am born in England

I am King's scholar

I am adventurous

I am a fan of horror films

I am a wannabe football player

I A M S A L E H

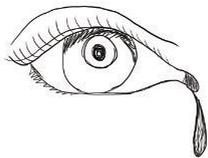
Bullying needs to stop

Bullying is the road to suicide
Kids affected by this have many stories
They've tried to hide

Bullying is the devil's best friend
His best sin is seeing people's life end
The tears of the innocence

Is all they need
It is their best bad deed

Bullying needs to stop
Bullying needs to end
Don't forget
It is the devil's best friend



GROUP PIECES



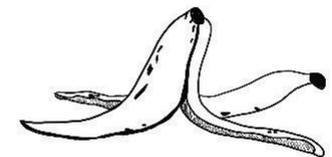
Elephants can't call the beauty into daylight
The outer vessel is a mask, a memory, but I still can't
look in the mirror
Divide me into equal pieces
An erupting earthquake shatters the integrity of my
thoughts
The night shortens the summer, eats the night
I want the moon, I want the future
My dad is the ocean; my temple aches in ruin
Fragile daggers in flesh
Waiting for angels to fall from sky
I am a risky cocktail of bad dreams and karma
Tiptoeing on the coast of the universe
I need more than the silence of sun
The moon doesn't have a soul
A glow on the edge of a cliff
An ache in the wild

A street of disappointment, the wild
Is a window that shows our true ambitions
My mother wakes like a resurrection, tangling
A yo-yo to a xylophone, always ending in mystery

Capture the world, my heart
Is a window filled with jam?
A bouncy ball on a roller coaster ride.

Mother is the key that unlocks bravery
The house is a walk-in fridge filled with grapes
But my frustration is a quarter of a bruised banana.

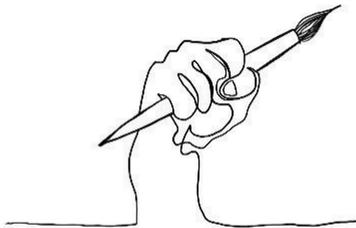
Disappointment filled with time
Cold and rigid.
Though we hate it, the world
Gave us unimaginable pain



JEMILEA



Jemilea is a British-Jamaican poet, writer, facilitator and creative director who is also the founder of Writerz and Scribez CIC. She is passionate about using art as a tool for social change.



From my bedroom window I can see the outline of
sky drifting above chimneys and satellite dishes,

the metal scaffolding of growth leaning upwards
like a beanstalk destined for greater adventure.

Cats are arguing again, the black one with green
eyes and the tabby having territorial battles over
someone else's front porch.

Bins line the street like soldiers standing to
attention waiting to unleash ammunition into the
tanks ploughing up the road.

It is Wednesday and the dark curtain of night has
lifted,

somewhere a toddler struggles to open their eyes
and uniforms are pulled out of hiding places.

The smell of black coffee and tiredness,

the ever present need to work,

tooting horns of frustrated drivers,

the road rage of a pensioner.

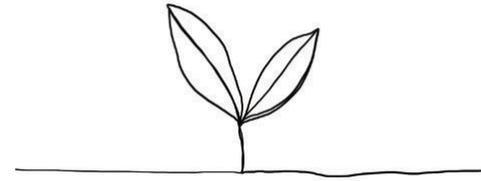
Scooters raced faster than parents can keep up to.

It is morning.

HOUSE OF HORRORS

(NEWSPAPER ACCOUNT)

They don't notice me, don't realise that I am here, watching, capturing all of the evidence. The rage that boils over their lips, the bubbling of wrath overflowing into their victims. The burns they carry scarred into the day. They dress in fine suits, ties and combed back hair, shiny shoes and the respect of a nation but they are gremlins creeping in corridors. Bullying stomped into the scalps of innocent women, violence showing up on every corner of the room. Sinking into the carpet. Tears hidden in the crease of their blouse. They are scared. Tiptoeing in fear. Bowing to the masters, afraid to speak. Afraid to reveal the truth. What is truth if no-one believes you...



I am the first fruits of a generation searching for
good ground

I am the seed of my ancestors' hope, the song of my
grandmother's soul

I am carrying legacy in my womb, untying the knots of
history

I am ready to rewrite the narrative

I am all the people before me, all the stories in my veins

I am more than happily ever after

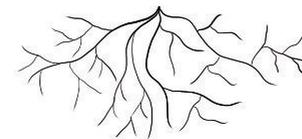
I am victory

I am a 5 ft 7 container of music, banter and good food

I am my father's joy and my mother's determination

\I am mother, daughter, wife

I am woman



DEANNA



Standing strong together
Working harder than before
Why things can sometimes be harder on your own
Do you know me?
Do I know you?
Exchange names,
Finding common interests
Who knew you were just like me,
But so different all the same
Can we make up a story from A - Z?

Each letter comes to life like the start of a story,
Together the story unfolds

The weird
The unusual
The funny can't describe what it's really about

Can we come up with a finished piece?
How deep are we falling into their minds?
Our characters,
Their feelings
Are they motivational driven by good or bad?

The world is like a Pinterest board
We learn from it we take inspiration
We take what we saw and create it into
something unique
Ideas combine a great story is born
We worked together to achieve the best



SAMIR



I am 23 years old but I look and feel a lot older

I am both the tri-colour and the union flag

But despite this,

I am a minority in the two countries that define me

I am more than just another statistic in the papers

I am my father's rage and my mother's kindness

I am the middle way in a world that leans either left or right

I am O-positive, bleeding dark red and on occasions, even blue

I am Samir

WHAT IS YOU PRESS?

You Press is a social enterprise based in London, which is currently run by creative artists & volunteers to support young writers & poets to bring their words and art to a wider audience.

Our projects empower young people and silent communities from a wide variety of demographics to find their voices and be heard.

Our work involves challenging stereotypes and stigmas associated with said groups as well as tackling social issues and promoting community cohesion through the creative arts & writing.

As an organisation, we pride ourselves on being:

Pioneering, Specialist and Empowering

As people, we pride ourselves on being:

Passionate, Co-operative and Professional

MEET THE TEAM



Farah Mohammoud - Project Coordinator

Farah is a passionate social entrepreneur who turned a social action campaign into an award-winning social enterprise. He has over six years of experience in training young people and managing volunteers.



Samir Sattar - Project Manager

Samir's passion for creative writing and journalism led him to become a content creator and editor at You Press. Fly Between The Lines was the first project he managed, having experience co-facilitating and volunteering in previous projects with the organisation.



Jemilea Wisdom-Baako - Project Facilitator

Jemilea is a British-Jamaican poet, writer, facilitator and creative director who is also the founder of Writerz and Scribez CIC. She is passionate about using art as a tool for social change.



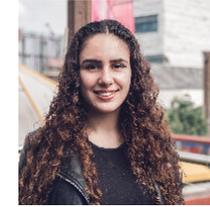
Anna Hickman - Project Illustrator

Anna is a graphic designer who joined You Press in 2018. She has an interest in branding and web design and likes to take on projects that reflect social causes she feels passionate about.



Deanna Tuitt - Project Volunteer

Deanna is a recent graduate from London Metropolitan University in creative writing. She has always been creative and writing has allowed her to create different characters and worlds she could escape in.



Katherine Mejia - Project Volunteer

Katherine is an aspiring engineer who enjoys expressing her creative side through her art and has been involved in various projects with You Press.



Amando Da Costa - Project Filmmaker

Amando is a young independent filmmaker with experience in creating promotional material and short films for a variety of organisations including You Press.



Deimante Stankute - Project Photographer

Deimante is an enthusiastic young creative photographer and videographer. She is keen on taking new opportunities that life brings to us and believes that every angle has its own story to tell.