

# I write because...



**City of Leeds School**



**The poems in this anthology were performed by students from City of Leeds School as part of ...**



The pieces were written during February and March 2013 as part of a series of workshops run by visiting poet, Michelle Scally Clarke, and English teacher, Liz Chillington. In later sessions the group were joined by musician Jonnie Khan, who recorded practice performances of the poems, set some pieces to music and accompanied some performances.

## **Don't know what to write**

Don't know what to write

My mind is blank as white

Trying to find inspirations

Thinking about the nation

Tic toc

Is the sound of the clock

That's spinning inside my head

Round and round

It goes around

Making me annoyed as hell

So much tapping

Feels like my brain

Just got washed

And it's empty

Everything feels blank

I write to forget the world

I write to express myself

I write because it feels

Like no-one else is listening

I write to feel full.

**Hyab Bereket**

## **Superboy**

I think about my life

And about the way that I'm living

If I bust shoots I really don't

Wanna go to prison

And if I die tonight

You know I wanna go to heaven

I am a man

Just like Manchester

I am

United.

Tell me why this world is still fighting

Tell me why I can hear a baby crying

And tell me why my goonz are still struggling

All this violence

All this crime

I bet no-one can come take my shine

You can't take my shine

## **What's the matter?**

What's the matter with people,  
Harrassing, bullying people  
Because they're themselves

So what's the point  
You wouldn't like it  
So shut the hell up!

Treat others with respect  
Or face the consequences of your actions  
Give up, help not hurt.

**Ben Brennan**

## **Heartbeat Fear**

Fear is stepping into a great unknown,  
A feeling of not knowing what can happen,  
Irrational fear,  
A knot inside your tummy like butterflies flying backwards a scared feeling that won't go away,  
You close your eyes and hope and pray that the fear will eventually go away,  
Let go of your fear and embrace the unknown,  
Let the light of the problem be shown,  
Embrace what you feel and don't worry about a thing,  
Fear prevents things from happening,  
Hear the drumming of the heartbeat,  
Counting every second you live,  
Counting each and every emotion of love you have to give,  
Your heartbeats fast and rapid until you can't breathe,  
Waiting to see what you have given you will receive,  
Intense pure love that runs so deep and deep as can be,  
What the heart doesn't feel the eyes can't see,  
To have or not to have is the question only the heart can answer,  
How you reply to it is your choice only your heart has the voice,  
So follow your heart's, dreams and ambitions,  
If you do your love will never go missing,

**Shannen Oddy**

## Rhythm

From the rhythm in my heart  
To the knowledge in my mind  
Let me explain to you  
The encyclopaedia that makes  
Antonio Bessa

Through my eyes I've observed the  
things  
That have made me grow  
The things that make me  
The man I am today  
But like any other person I've had  
experiences..  
That have demised me

This is what I am

It is every person's goal to be perfect  
But we all know it ain't easy  
With all the trials and difficulties we  
come across  
It makes me wonder why do we  
bother  
Why should we bother  
It ain't like its gonna affect us  
I was born and raised a certain way

And when someone comes and tells  
me it's wrong

Well, you haven't been raised like  
me though.

This is me

This is how I was raised

This is how I choose to be

And no one can change that .

## **My Understanding**

I am not a failure

I am not who you think I am

You have come a long way to judge me

There is a straight line

In front of me is a Grace

I have lost my voice

The rainbow of the reflexing sun

This has given me flying colours

I am now successful

Why asked

You saw me and you think I am an empty barrel

I make unnecessary noise

Have you realised that my words mean something?

Don't ask for my forgiveness

My heart is white and does not keep hurt

Forget the past

I am by your side

Don't give up,

LOVE!

**Louisa Kwofie**

## Home

Old memories fade,

new will follow,

house now hollow.

Black movements creep like shadows

moving, swaying, like memories of past.

A past not so clear

a past lit by a light of fire,

fire from the heart –

a heart driven by desire.

The pain, the sadness, flows through

and through me.

Memories of a hollow house filled with

love, laughter and sadness.

I lose myself in the memory –

The shock of the past hits me like a shell.

It may be easy to wash dirt off

from my hands, but not the pain in my heart.

My closet is full,

my shoulders are heavy,

struggling for feelings to seep through,

to show, to be released from my closet.

Old memories will fade.

New will follow.

House is now hollow.

Black movements creep like shadows

moving, swaying, like memories of past.

A past not so clear,

a past lit by a light of fire.

A fire from the heart.

Driven by desire.

**Tafadzwa Mokgwahthi**

## **Where's the love?**

Love is not danger

for that special someone to become a stranger.

Love is pure and secure,

Where is the love?

Love is about me and you

being with you

being a part of you.

Where is the love?

Love is seeking happiness

Having a boyfriend or a lover

The feeling of feeling alive again

Where is the love?

Love is not violence

Neither silence.

Love is spacious, gracious

Where is the love?

Love is not confusing

Causing bruising and losing

Love is trust. Honesty.

No lies. No cries

Where is the love?

**Neelam Chohan**

## **Our generation**

Life is life,

People misuse it,

Others abuse it,

Rape , theft, and drugs,

That's all we hear about in the news,

Never unions, nor peace,

Instead we remember events like 9/11 and  
7/7,

What will happen if we carry on?

Were the words not written on the dollar bill  
stating that 'in god we trust'?

And were your mothers never stating,

That violence and war is wrong?

Then why,

O lord why,

Do we still carry on!

In the end we will all fade away,

Annihilated by our own hatred of each other  
and dumb-founded stupidity,

**JUST STOP.**

Smile at the person next to you,

You don't even need to know them,

Just show this act of kindness,

And show them that you do not fit into the  
stereotypes of this generation.

So in the same breath I take to recite this  
poem to you,

I am trying to spread the word of a world I  
want to live in,

So like I am,

Spread the word,

Violence is out,

Peace is in.

**Jade Gilbertson**

## Remember

Every day ain't the same  
Cause you ain't there  
New Year's Eve we celebrate  
But all we celebrated was a new  
Year without you  
I remember the day of your funeral  
I couldn't stand to see you like that  
Your face pale like the ice caps of the North Pole  
Your skin so cold that I caught frost bite

I miss you

Every time my little sister asks where you are  
I say that you have gone home  
You were so special I can't bear  
That empty space in the chair  
You taught me everything, you taught  
Me manners but...

Just but, there's that empty space again  
Every time I remember  
It causes more pain to the brain  
I LOVE YOU

**Courtney Morton**

## **One Love**

I loved once but it ended in disaster  
I was so excited when I asked this girl out  
But nervous because she might say yes or no  
So when she said yes I was over the moon  
I'd never asked before.

The first kiss was dreamy  
I loved every millisecond of it  
I wished it would never end  
But it did.

I loved her, she loved me,  
So when I had to go it broke my heart.  
I had to move 60 miles away,  
On the last day I said my goodbyes

And I gave her two rings  
One said 'I love' and the other said 'you'  
  
So I was full of joy and disappointment  
Because I had to go and this girl  
The most beautiful and amazing I ever saw  
Was away and out of my reach.  
When I left it was like I had been  
Stabbed in the heart a thousand times.

I wish we could meet again but I doubt it  
So I will always miss her  
And remember the last words she said to me  
'I will always love you'  
And then my heart went dum dum dum...

**Ben Brennan**

## Valentine

Even when I walked into Sainsbury's,

there was heart shaped serviettes

What's the point?

Flowers symbolize guilt,

Red represents rage,

Wine is a headache

And chocolate makes you fat!

No red envelope waiting in your letterbox

The heartache when you realise your boyfriend

was too broke to buy you anything.

Spent all day chafing your feet in your favourite heels

And it just gets worse,

anti-climax.

I'd like to end with a heartfelt plea

Get rid of Valentine's Day,

it's pointless!

Emma Rose

## Love

Have you ever been in love?

Yes I have been there.

I even got the girl...

Who would love me even after I am dead.

You know how I am,

You know how I get,

But even after knowing that you

Loved and stayed with me baby.

We might fight

We might quarrel

But even after that...

We know that we will love each other to the end

You might scream at me

And I might react to it,

But you still know that bay...

I'll never hurt you whilst I am here.

As long as we are together,

I don't care what's with others,

Because...as long as you are here...

I would fight for you til it's over.

I can't leave you

You can't leave me

We are two attached chains

Made from a living relationship.

**Farhan Khan**

## **Boiling point**

Like an animal pounces on its prey  
Makes you roar like a lion commanding its kingdom  
It's caged like a wild animal  
Struggling to be released  
To be freed and expressed  
To run wildly to its home  
Feeling the pressure of its hatred bleed away  
To blossom into a flower  
Of warmth, joy, love and happiness  
A happiness that spreads like a ray of sunshine  
Sunshine that will warm the coldest heart  
A heart that has been swallowed  
By shadows of doom and gloom  
The twins of disaster.

**Tafadzwa Mokgwathi**

## **She**

She begged and begged

She waited and waited

But her soul refused

*My heart starts beating*

*The blood starts flowing*

*The world is spinning*

*Your eyes start glowing*

She could not stay

She could not keep away

She could not go

Cause she would end up in a hole

*No one believes*

*No one sees*

*No one thinks*

*No one blinks*

Every move she made

Every step she takes

Made her realise

She is not meant to rise.

## **Earliest Memories**

The sound of children playing.

The sun beaming down on my face

My Grandma cooking that true African fufu.

These were my happiest memories

Living without a care in the world

I remember running round in my underwear

With Mum behind me with a pair of trousers.

My baby cousin always crying

Getting attention from the rest of the family.

That was the happiest day of my life

But it didn't last, it never lasts.

Now I'm in England.

No big garden

No African cooking

No mother to clean up after my mistakes.

One day I wanna go back

Back to Africa

Back to my home

Back to that happiness

To be able to offer my children that happiness

That carelessness

That sense of belonging

And make that the happiest days of their lives too.

**Antonio Bessa**

## **Sadness**

There's a light in each and every tunnel  
Some people see it  
Some people don't  
Some people run to it  
Some people don't  
Some people stay above ground  
Some go under  
Do you know what goes on behind closed doors?  
Cause I don't  
Do you see people's pain?  
Cause I don't  
You say you feel the same  
How can you feel the same if you don't feel my pain  
I might drop a tear  
But does it mean I'm crying?  
I might be at the bottom  
But I'm still trying.

**Shannen Oddy**

## Angel of the North

"It's there!" I shouted

And the whole bus laughed,

Indulging the child,

We'd travelled from home.

An expedition.

My brother and me and Dad.

But not Mum.

100 times my height

100,000 times my weight

Just like an angel

Rusting massiveness.

All exhilaration

Our arms together could not reach round  
it

My brother's and mine and Dad's

But maybe if Mum had come..

Later, I was in our yellow hall

Tracing the green diamonds on the carpet

With 6 year old fingers

Something's not right

Mum and Dad are in my room

I am in the hall

All confusion

I hear Mum's voice,

For what seems like the first time that  
day,

Telling my Dad

"I don't love you anymore"

My bedtime story was not the same

6 year old tears pooled in my eyes

Not quite understanding

Just feeling

My childhood solidified

Now I stand solid

Weathering all

Like the Angel of the North.

**Emma Rose**

## **Don't Judge Me**

I've done things wrong

It doesn't mean I am a bad person

But something that does annoy me

Is that people take the mick of people because they're different

If you were in their shoes

Would you feel hurt?

Just because they're different, you decided,

Taking the opportunity to bully them.

OK it's fine, it's not my decision,

It's yours.

So, what are you gonna do,

Hurt someone or try to accept they're different to you?

**Ben Brennan**

## **The Truth**

I grew up in Chapeltown  
A place where everyone sticks up for each other  
A place with gangs  
A place with knife attacks  
A place where you look outside and see no future  
When I walk out the door I see...  
That's just it. I see nothing.  
My Nana's ill  
She's in so much pain  
I cry almost every day  
All I can hear is people screaming  
'You're alone' over and over again  
I ain't like much teens, I'm always inside  
My Mum keeps me in - looking out.  
For me, I guess.

But me, what I want; I want to be free,  
I want to hang out with my friends,  
I want to stay out late,  
Experience stuff I haven't experienced,  
Go parties,  
Have fun,  
I want to live young.

And that's the truth

**Courtney Morton**

## **The Devils are Back**

The devils are back

The kingdom thrashed

You know how it gets

So be prepared for the end

Soldiers are killed

Innocents are lost

All the lives lay

Upon a grave ...so strong!

The sky was bright

But my heart is shattered,

I thought I would be OK

But it turned out to be a bummer

I wanted to be alone

But I was with some people

I changed my mind

After what I was asked to do

You are lonely as a dark alley

And I shine like the star on your way

In the eclipse night

I will have to leave you....away

I cheered up my mind

I remember all your words

I will keep them safe, away

Away from all the others

**Farhan Khan**

## **My Life**

I walk down to the river

That is first thing in the morning

Bathe and walk down to school.

A single mother

Sitting under the sun

Shouting and pleading with people to buy from her.

After school

I use my uniform to sell in the market

Wait till Mum comes back, then we get something to eat.

Life was hard for Mum

My brother in his final year of education

No money

I have to drop my education

Mum supports my brother with my money.

Life became harder and harder

Like brother and sister

We sat and thought

We ask Mum

Where is our father?

She cried

But she did not say a word.

A phone call came from my Uncle

I was so excited!

She was so, so happy

She then settled down with joy

That was the first day Mum became happy

She said,

Louisa, Efua your Uncle will be taking you to stay with him.

That was when I came here

28<sup>th</sup> October 2011

I was in the same house with my Uncle

Life was good

But I can't take my mind off Mum.

Mother, this is a promise

I will make you happy

I will take care of you

Love you, dear Mum.

**Louisa Kwofie**

## Unleashed

The anger that I'm feeling  
Feels like the Devil inside me  
I feel like killing someone  
And then shouting out  
RAH!!!

There's a beast in me  
Waiting to be unleashed  
A little black boy but  
Slowly turning into a gorilla  
Don't you see me?

I am asking you  
Don't you see me?  
I am asking you  
One more time  
Don't you see me?

I am not the demon you make me out to be  
You wanna take my crown and I ain't the king  
I ain't the king  
I ain't the prince.  
No, I ain't none of that.

Right now  
I said right now!!!  
I am a red nosed pitbull  
About to be let off my leash.

Do you see me now?  
Do you see me now?  
Do you see me?

**Ghyraiss M'Poussa**