



Blank Pages

Creative Expression Workshops

There's life, there's love there's blood,

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This collection is an open-source resource and its dissemination is free and welcome.

The purpose of Blank Pages is to give space to everybody through creative expression. Our goal is to nourish and promote intercultural connections to allow us to cross the physical and metaphorical borders that surround us. Blank Pages promotes dialogue based on free creative expression not limited to a specific language or medium. We believe in the universality of creative expression and its power to foster our common humanity.

To find out more please visit:
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Introduction:

I saw with my own eyes the Sibyl at Cumae hanging in a cage, and when the boys said to her: "Sibyl, what do you want?" she answered: "I want to die." - T.S. Eliot, Epigraph, "The Waste Land."

What is the opposite of love? Is it violence? As violence and its impact are ever-present and unbearable, suffocating, we are each time confronted with the waves of pain it generates; violence consumes and grows like a parasite.

This collection is the result of a meeting of different minds, emotions, and hopes, in a space free of borders in which creative expression allowed us to connect genuinely as humans and share the expressions of our minds. Together we were able to face violence, dissect it, but could we exorcise it? How to exorcise it? The poems that you are about to read were once a page that was blank, now they just are. They are "the fragments [we] have shored against [our] ruins" ("The Waste Land," v. 431), against the violence that surrounds, paralyses, and suffocates us.

We invite you to connect to us through their sound and meaning and be inspired to turn a blank page into a voice, with whichever tool you prefer. We hope and believe that together we can de-construct the mechanisms of violence and re-construct a world in which the aberration of violence is expressed through the recognition of our common humanity and through any form of love. In this and many other senses, love is the opposite of violence.

We are one.

Michał Musiałowski

Jacarezinho Massacre

by *Cristene Brito*

The song denounced it:

“The cheapest meat on the market is the black meat.” The cheapest death on the streets is the black death. The cheapest blood spilt on the ground is the black blood. How dare people set a price on a dead body?

Based on the colour of the skin? How dare people say “ I don't care. They're all bandits and thieves.”

There's no such thing as black blood. There's no such thing as a coloured man. There's life, there's blood, there's love, No, there's no love;

as long as there's colour, There's no love.

Based on the song “Carne” by Seu Jorge

I seek a new place

by *Paul T. Liam*

I seek a place...

Where my woes shall drown

In the ecstasy of newness

Where I shall belong completely

And be loved in whole

And nothing else but my humanity shall matter

I have lived a million pains

Swam salty seas

In search of purpose

But rejection greeted my smile for love

But now I am free

And I shall sail to the bliss of afterlife

Do we Know?

by *Michele Rizzardi*

What do we know?

What do I know?

Words of humanity

Shards of waste

Fragments of mandatory consumption

Little boxes where we seat tight

Silent

Compliant

What do we know?

What do I know?

Of your words of humanity?

Droplets of spit

Mixed with anxious smoking cigarette butts

Embedded with our blood

I'll be a vehicle to connect the stream that connect us

We can sail our hands over the frame of violence

And try to grasp

Shards of freedom

What do we know?

What do I know?

Do we know?

The sudden death of self-imposed identity

by *Michał Musiałowski*

I burned the flag
and stepped on all the poppy flowers
My lips kissed the earth
slowly burning with fire

My eyes drunk with the feast of hope,
grilled by the heat of the beaming light,
I took off and sung
about my flight high upon

metallic rooftop towers

After the flight, the fall
and the hard surface of the ocean -
the earth in its eternal motion
embraced me in its lullaby
and digested me

They say “Rest well, Icarus!”
on the bottom, among fish
I will rise again to adore the flowers
and tell violence about her defeat

Centrifuge

by *Emman Usman Shehu*

You go there
legs moving
an orchestra
decoding expectation
fuelled by anxiety.
You see there
the aftermath
devoid of mirth.
You stand there
centrifuge of emotions
spilling...

Sunset (a duet)

by *Abdulrahman Muhammad Ndako and Aeesha Abdullahi Alhaji*

Aftermath the turbulent arrows of water
 The sun comes with beams sending it's fiercest golden rays to mother earth
 Of moisture and wetness the earth gleams with the foray of brightness -
Aeesha

These days, as the sun journey home to mama
 And the sun races to lay on it's bed for east
 The cloud darkens like they have shades on
 And the trees dance to the tune the breeze blew - *Ndako*

In the sands of time, the sun is high
 Bringing succour to the damp earth
 Shrouding mortals in it's golden rays
 Amidst it warmest grails, the earth is thrilled - *Aeesha*

As it's bidding the earth adieu
 Giving way for it's reflective ally
 It's came alongside a gift
 Sending chill throughout every nook - *Ndako*

Leading trails for twilight reign
 Thy sun farewell wouldn't fade
 Resting within yellow blossom,
 It's sight spins aces shading the sky blue - *Aeesha*

And for days now, the curtains go up, the sky pregnant with fervour
 A sign of blessings, of droplets and splashes
 Of infinity and man
 Such favour worth the eternal worship of the God of man - *Ndako*

Tentacles

by *Emman Usman Shehu*

The lips
invite
a luscious
kiss.
A web
of desire
spreads tentacles

Love, life and Blood

by Abraham A.

Yes, I want to say: We, the people,
Humanity! One in all and all in one.
I dream of life full of harmony and love;
I dream of life in equality, fairness and fraternity;
Just as how it is supposed to be.

Yes, In love, life is thick as blood - the sea of life (!)
That we all share.

I dream of a living, wherein;
Honesty
Kindness
Love
Charity
Compassion ... these are the identities!

And above all, Humanity,
A body we all share,
the sole source and ultimate destiny,
in the walks of life, love, and blood.
Let's be true to humanity

Forecast

by *Aeesha Abdullahi Alhaji*

In the midst of phlegmatic and bloomy

Autumn

Dwindling in a haste of chastity venom
will Time see through the hourglass
of legacy?

Has the vile treachery trumped the thick bond of fate?

Has the ill conquest of man's tainted souls
seek out the gloom of the rising era?

Will the incurable spite for death's invisible cloak waylay its dues?
Amidst the lanes of ruptured borders lies the garden of solace

Will the pale moon transgress the boundary of visage
and illuminate the paths to oblivion

Unforeseen lineages of Man's cruelty
thy not forego the path to freedom and legion

About the authors



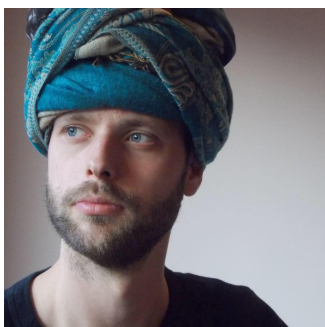
Crislene Brito is a 'non-poet' who appreciates the hidden beauties scattered over the world. She believes in the transformative power of affection intrinsic in good encounters. Love and kindness can change our worlds.



Michele Rizzardi is a poet and a humanist. He is interested in the promotion of a queer and intercultural dialogue and the co-creation of a cosmopolitan future of connection and inspiration, beyond any border. Michele is one of founding members of Blank Pages

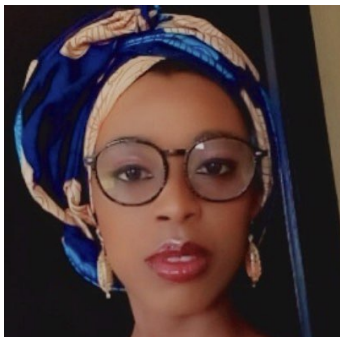


Paul T. Liam is a poet, critic and author of two poetry collections. He lives in Abuja, Nigeria. Paul is one of founding members of Blank Pages



Michal Musialowski is a poet and teacher, born in the space in-between. He is interested in the construction of a common cosmopolitan future for everyone. Michal is one of the founding members of Blank Pages.

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His writing interests include articles, essays, short stories, drama, documentaries and reviews. He has three published collections of poetry **Questions For Big Brother**, **Open Sesame** and **Icarus Rising** .



Abraham A. is a poet, a humanist, a cosmopolitan, and a dreamer. Rooted in Ethiopia, he is currently exploring the world as a student of the European Master in Migration and Intercultural Relations (EMMIR) and registering the world around through his outstanding creativity and curiosity.



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