

Dynamic poetry from videogame designers, Mè'phàà native speakers and songwriters

Published by flipped eye in December 2021



L-R: Aislinn Evans, Kwaku Darko-Mensah Jr, Hubert Matiúwàà

***Flood Season* by Kwaku Darko-Mensah Jr – 2nd December 2021**

***The Towns We Leave Hate Us Most* by Aislinn Evans – 9th December 2021**

***First Rain* by Hubert Matiúwàà – 16th December 2021**

flipped eye, the independent publisher who first published acclaimed poets including **Inua Ellams**, **Malika Booker**, **Miriam Nash**, **Nick Makoha** and **Warsan Shire**, present three new poetry collections for December 2021. *First Rain*, the first ever English collection by Mè'phàà native speaker **Hubert Matiúwàà**; *The Towns We Leave Hate Us Most*, an unconventional visual pamphlet by interdisciplinary artist and writer **Aislinn Evans**; and *Flood Season* by singer-songwriter, artist and poet **Kwaku Darko-Mensah Jr**.

***First Rain* by Hubert Matiúwàà**

Written originally in Mè'phàà, ***First Rain*** (out 16 December) is a selection of poems that emerged from the poet responding to the death of his grandmother who declared to him in 2005, "I will die in the days when the first rains come". The work mourns both the loss of a grandmother, and the fading away of a culture and language that hold so much history and pride.

The pamphlet addresses social, racial and gender inequalities, environmental abuses and injustices faced by native peoples in Latin America – issues that have resonance globally. As the poet recounts: "In the face of the wind, grab the stones that are falling upon us, one of his grandmother's phrases, refers to people standing up to injustice". This collection, Hubert Matiúwàà's first ever in English, translated by a Mexican-British poet Juana Adcock, is a gathering of stones.

Born in Guerrero, Mexico, Hubert's mother tongue is Mè'phàà, and he first encountered literacy and the Spanish language at school. Keen to preserve the oral memory and stories he inherited from his grandmother and family, he started writing poetry in a phonetic version of Mè'phàà, and later on revised some of his work according to the language's grammatical rules. The very act of writing in a language that has systematically been excluded from this world is for Hubert a political act of resistance and militancy, and a way get his own story back.

***The Towns We Leave Hate Us Most* by Aislinn Evans**



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A poetic journey as much as a visual exploration, *The Towns We Leave Hate Us Most* (out 9 December) is the début collection by interdisciplinary artist, writer, youth worker and alternative educator Aislinn Evans (they/them).

Lovingly produced as a collectible item with an inimitable aesthetics, the collection features traditional poems, cut-out cards, language role-play, formal experimentation and bold illustrations, in a unique blend that defies categorisation.

With a background in slam poetry, videogame design, film-making and comics, Aislinn is interested in the ways 'low' culture can make complex ideas culturally accessible – and fun. Navigating the peripheries of culture at the intersection of working-class, neurodivergent and queer experiences, they appropriate and reinvent folklore, myths and popular narratives to bring underlying tensions to the surface.

***Flood Season* by Kwaku Darko-Mensah Jr.**

After over a decade working as a musician, Kwaku Darko-Mensah Jnr. makes a full-blooded return to poetry. His début *Flood Season* (out 2 December) explores diasporic lives, the tensions between who we are and the clichés that surround our nation states, and hybridity. His poems carry their weight easily, fizz with the joy of a burst man.

A Ghanaian-born Montreal-based artist and writer, Kwaku has been recording and performing music under the name Kae Sun. His musical beginnings have gospel roots in his local church in Ghana, as well as in his father's good collection of soul records. After moving to Canada, he learned to play the guitar and experimented with song-writing across genres, mixing hip-hop with soul and funk, indie pop with world music, and folk melodies with African pidgin lyrics.

His music has a unique blend of influences owing to his background and personal history, while his poetic lyrics have been noted as being both observational and personal often touching on spiritual, esoteric and socio-political themes. According to The Tech, "despite this unbridled exploration with sound and lyrics, he colours his music with two virtues that seem to be of great importance to him – spirituality and honesty."

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Notes to editors



FLOOD SEASON by Kwaku Darko-Mensah Jnr

Published by the flap series, the pamphlet series of flipped eye

Poetry Pamphlet, priced £4

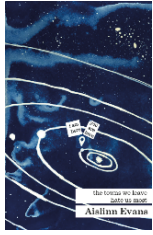
ISBN: 978-1-905233-76-2

2 December 2021



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THE TOWNS WE LEAVE HATE US MOST by Aislinn Evans

Published by defeye, imprint of flipped eye

Paperback Original, priced £4.99

ISBN: 978-1-9052337-5-5

9 December 2021



FIRST RAIN by Hubert Matiúwàà, translated by Juana Adcock

Published by flipped eye

Poetry Collection, priced £7.99

ISBN: 978-1-905233-70-0

16 December 2021

About flipped eye

Founded in 2001 by Nii Ayikwei Parkes, an editor and award-winning writer, flipped eye publishing has won global critical acclaim, playing a key role in developing poets such as Inua Ellams, Malika Booker, Miriam Nash, Nick Makoha and Warsan Shire.

flipped eye publishes powerful new voices in affordable volumes. Recognised globally as an incubator for exciting talent, it is the original home of leading contemporary writers such as Roger Robinson and Nikesh Shukla.

flipped eye's focus on cultivating potential and giving a platform to stories that represent a truly global scope of lived experience and literary traditions, literally "flips" the traditional mainstream, giving prominence to writers from all sectors of society and publishing the widest possible range of voices.

Working with a not-for-profit model since its inception, flipped eye is a lean, reader-focussed, writer-loving support system for culture that matters.

About the authors

Hubert Matiúwàà

Hubert Matiúwàà is a member of the Mè'phàà culture. He has a B.A. in literature and philosophy from the Autonomous University of Guerrero and an M.A. in Latin American studies from the UNAM. In 2016 he was awarded the Cenzontle Indigenous Languages Prize and participated in the Seventh Carlos Montemayor Indigenous Language Poetry Festival. In 2017 he won both the Indigenous Literatures of the Americas Prize and Guerrero state's Youth Poetry Prize. He is the author of *Xtámbaa/Piel de Tierra* (2016) and *Tsína rí nà yaxà'/Cicatriz que te mira* (2017). His work has previously appeared in English in *Latin American Literature Today*.

Aislinn Evans

Aislinn Evans is not an artist. They are primarily a reckless cyclist, a daughter, a son, a worker and a renter. However, they are known to make various things, such as films, poems, and games. These things pertain often to the character of the urban landscape, class struggle, and alienation. Their work flits across and between media, building an interdependence between writing, performance, and images. An interdependence between audience and maker. As a writer, Aislinn's work is visual, spatial, and interactive – demanding active engagement from the reader to bring the text to life. Aislinn has worked with the Barbican, Create London, and the Live Art Development Agency. They are a National Poetry Slam champion and founder of The Sofa Slam; Barking & Dagenham's first poetry slam.



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Kwaku Darko-Mensah Jr.

Kwaku Darko-Mensah Jr. is a Ghanaian-born, Montreal-based artist and writer who records and performs music as Kae Sun. His genre-defying approach to music and writing is anchored in poetry and deals with existential musings on heritage, belonging and desire. Beginning with his project *Oceans Apart* (2015), Kwaku has written and produced collaborative works in short film and installation art, with the above-mentioned piece featured in the travelling exhibition *Future Africa Visions in Time* (2015–2019). His work has appeared in publications such as Exclaim, Complex, Vogue Germany and Vice Magazine. He has an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of British Columbia.