

White Walls: Healing through Poetry

In a world where institutions and systems oppress and atomise us, we can be held and healed in community.

This workshop challenged the traditional idea that the film is a “full stop” and that we as an audience are passive participants. Instead, in a simple gesture of mutual witnessing, this poetry workshop extended the collaborative process of White Walls from the writers room and film crew, to include the general public.

The participants were given the space to respond to the film through poetry prompts inspired by it's themes; layering and juxtaposing their individual experiences and perspectives of institutional harm, resistance and healing into polyvocal poems.

The resulting poems: “Chaos” and “Loom”, go beyond what any one individual can create in isolation. They are a celebration of what we can do when we come together to think, create and feel out loud; embracing the imperfection of improvisation, the messiness of community and what it means to love and care, even through the pain.

Chaos

"There is always beauty in chaos... You just have to look for it," Atticus

Fracture of self. I was born with mistrust in my blood & trust in my heart & then there was the bleeding

A crowing rooster in the distance calls the meeting to order

Does the cold grey make your skin so pale you feel like you might be like them?

horror is realising we were never supposed to be gods

Lanyards, clocks and corridors, the chairs are plastic

the soil is poisoned, the carrots are frozen we are all losing sight, we are walking into walls

Hibiscus fried on a BBQ grill, a calamity

resistance is the baby tooth that I won't let fall out

we stand in line with our request to be set free & you draw your bars around us closer

The flat of the palm a wall between here and there

Dewdrops on a leaf at the break of dawn

That wound won't close but I'm tending to it

Either way I am never whole, the mirror is lying to me

Curious is counting down the nine lives because each death is a lesson learned

Sand on the breath to the beat of drums

I am dying because the hole in the ground was already dug

I resist we resist we hold mould in our mouths and tell you that all life is sacred

The hunger that intensified beyond itself

We will stay in touch outside of these roles , beyond,

Black tie pulled to choking the gullet spilling over

nobody asked your name, they just wanted an identifier

I exist because I am still here & I unwished myself from the soil

sing sing sing whoever said silence was golden?

It is winter again and again, summer never happened

M

Tara @shadedwriters

PJ @spktheword

Loom

Horror is ineffable unless you are the one holding your own hand

Beauty is realising the gaps between our fingers are meant to lock with others

The source of the horror is the same place I would seek safety from it

Beauty is adamant, it averts the eyes of the gazed at

Cartography of our pain, roads we must walk twice in order to leave them behind

Glittering, alive, transforming and transformative

You are holding their hand for

dear life,

this wired circuitry,

the photosynthesis absorbs you

No cages to hold or contain,

the outdoors spills you over in splendour

We are the original net, the net of your origins.

Your veins are our veins, threading down and up each generation.

A compulsory story shared, being written by and through you

Forsake nostalgia, what holds it. Trust time until the revolutions come.

Every second a web binding us closer to our freedom.

Aphra

Tazeem

Dita NL

Juno