

Port Harcourt

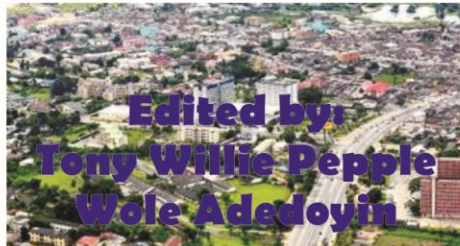
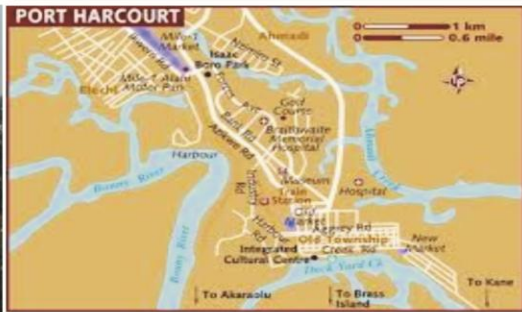
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100 Poetry Anthology

*(A Poetry anthology in celebration
of Port Harcourt @ 100)*



Port Harcourt



Edited by:
Tony Willie Pepple
Wole Adedoyin

**A Publication of the Society of Young Nigerian
Writers**

Compiled by:

Wole Adedoyin



For The Literary And Creative Development Of Nigerian Young Writers

Dedication

Dedicated to all the Contributors.

First Published 2013

Published by:

Press and Publications Department of SYNW

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THE GLORY OF TOMORROW

Today, we reminisce with nostalgia and tears,
On our trek and pilgrimage through the years,
Today, we mark the scars and stars of time,
On the rickety frame and soul of our clime;
At the birth of time, it was a nest of nature,
Clad in flora and fauna, with dreams for the future,
Birds chirped away at the distant sky,
The music of the woods made spirits high,
Twilight folktales and memories stole our huts,
Peace and pure camaraderie made our lots.

Alas! Time made us guests to burdensome folks,
Feigning lamb-like guests, with the leviathan's strokes,
We bore the Whiteman's burden in our region,
Adorned subtly with the cloak of civility and religion,
They came behind the façade of the Holy Word,
And unleashed the venom of the merciless sword,
They turned lords to rule our tropical waves,
And made our mothers and fathers slaves,
While we labored under a pitiless pain,

They reveled in the spirit of the champagne.

Share not in our stinging memories of chains,
Drink not from our epochal jars of pains,
Our guests' burden was a racist bourgeois mantra,
Poor men from poor metropolises, enriched by poor
Africa;
Bring me not memories of our triangular trade,
Nor the fettered epoch of our vassal grade,
Tell me not of colonial guests' tools in the nation,
For they're all monstrous sordid façades of
dissimulation,
Tell me not of the vilest rape and debauchery of a
people,
Lest you make hearts the boiling pot of a ripple.

Tell all ears with a romance of nostalgia,
Of the travails of this Niger Area,
Oft in the belly of soul-sickening throes,
Oft in pitiless stinging odious woes,
We've passed through the fire, flame and flood,
We've survived the baths of blood,

Heights of bliss; depths so bleak, in our clime,
Sober memorable moments of time,
Treasured beyond the gold in Spanish mines,
To indite, troubadours would pen classic lines.

Albeit, the tides have come and gone,
Let hearts and souls be no more forlorn,
Afflict us no more in a mournful number,
Sing us not melancholy melodies to bring us slumber,
Let the dark ages of our despair quell the dark story,
For 'tis the epoch to blaze a trail of glory,
All feet on clay, set to scale so far,
For acquaintance with our near star,
Shed no more the tears of sorrow,
Ere comes the glory of tomorrow!

Magnus Abraham-Dukuma

About the Poem:

The Glory of Tomorrow chronicles our journey, as a people, from pre-colonial times to this present moment wherein we hope for a glorious tomorrow.

NATIVE MARCHING SERENADE

Here comes my native marching serenade,
A time of native convalescence of strife gone by,
An aura of jubilation and camaraderie on high,
An evanescence of rivalries in my clime,
A spontaneous recovery of glad spirits of time.

Here comes my native marching serenade,
Come see diverse culture on parade,
An epic display of scenery natively made,
Come see the camaraderie of a people,
A tide birthing a fresh spurt, and quelling ripple.

Here comes my native marching serenade,
The music of spirits and mortals,
The talking of native beads and dancing of petals,
The throbbing of bosoms and flaunting of waists,
The shouting of whistles, gongs and rhythm of breasts.

Here comes my native marching serenade,
Let this camaraderie be our soul lover,

May it be over and, in hearts, not over,
May its reminiscence breed a good picture,
And may its fruit bring a better future!

Magnus Abraham-Dukuma

About the Poem:

Native Marching Serenade is a traditional lyrical poem for celebrating the Port Harcourt Centenary Anniversary and the Rivers State Annual Carnival (CARNIRIV).

SALVATION FRONT

We look for the birth of better years,
And the oblivion of dead dark days,
We stand this day with a heavy sigh,
Waiting for a kinder sky.

We look for streets of gold,
And a haven hewn as abode,
We stand this day with a stinging sorrow,
Waiting for the glory of tomorrow.

We look for a semblance of peace,
And the lovely caress of bliss,
We stand this day for a better lot,
Waiting for our salvation front.

Magnus Abraham-Dukuma

About the Poem:

Salvation Front yearns for the birth of better days and years ahead, as we can never get to the acme of our socio-political evolution.

STAR-LIT COURSE

Years have come and gone,
Days have shared the stars and sun.

Now dawns a new day,
The death of days births a new year;
As these days shall live,
Let's have what we please.

Let the sun light our course,
Let the stars guide our course,
Let the moon gladly grace our night,
Let our stars bring us blessings and light.

Let our course be star-lit,
Let our days be glory-arrayed,
Let's know the peace of the ether,
Let our dreams come true.

We'll go far!
Naught shall men dim our star,

Though dreams come true tomorrow,
And not today, clad in tearful sorrow,
Let our course be star-lit,
Let our days be glory-arrayed,
As these days shall live,
We crave a star-lit course.

Magnus Abraham-Dukuma

About the Poem

: *Star-lit Course* is an affirmation of a better tomorrow,
sharing similitude with *Salvation Front*.

A MATTER OF TIME

I had once heard of a child of nobody,
Who later become a renowned somebody.
Albert Einstein was once the class dullest,
But later recorded as the world brightest.
Ben Carson was once regarded as nonentity,
But he later esteemed as a celebrity.
And Barrack Obama, who is now being celebrated,
Was formerly scorned and humiliated.
Certainly, Life is a matter of time.

That you look like a beggar,
Not necessarily mean you can't be a pillar.
Even if you sometimes score zero,
Doesn't mean you can't be a hero.
That everything seems rough and tight,
Doesn't mean your future is not right and bright.
At times, when you are driven to the wall,
Just strive hard in order not to fall.
Since success in life is just a matter of time.

Therefore, neither be in a haste nor in a hurry,
Even if success depends on accuracy and capacity.
If your life experience now is disappointment,
Doesn't connote you can't be rewarded with an
appointment.
Even if your endeavors bring fruitless effort,
Your consistency and persistency can bear fruitful result.
Remember, anxiety in life can make one to be deformed,
But through hard work and prayer, one can easily be
transformed.
Since everything is a matter of time.

Thus, don't succumb to any devastating condition,
As you will soon be crowned with a pleasant position.
Remember, there is always a long pleasure,
At the end of every tunnel of pressure.
Therefore, erase the terrible picture,
That the world is painting on your colourful future.
Your obstacles can turn into miracles,
And your barriers can bring wonders.
Awaiting for God's time, things are made comfortable.

Attached to this mail is a copy of this email in a word format.

Ogedengbe Tolulope

About the poem:

The poem entitled “A matter of time” describing life’s success as a matter of time. The poem depicts that no condition is permanent and when it comes to succeeding in life, there are no late comers. Conclusively, no matter how the present condition, we should not give up in life.

TOMORROW

The most terrible day
The day no eye has seen
The day no eye can see
The day beyond our dreams

Who has ever seen tomorrow?
Or can hint to us the cloth it's clad?
They pin our hopes in tomorrow
But no eye has ever seen the ray
Of the long-awaited day.

Our celebrated Solomon says:
Man is the offshoot of the distorted ape,
Earth dances round the legless sun,
Earth steals the shape of the poor sphere
And more,
The sermons of the wise. Agreed.
But for "tomorrow" all the sage mouths shut.

In this stinking slums,
Where my dangling legs

Are hanged to my lice-ridden head,
My bloodless eyes see only today
And hear about tomorrow
Whose sun has never woken

They acceded to the throne
Brimming our ravenous hearts
With fusillade of promises and hopes
To dry tears from every eye
To provide eyes for every blind,
To give legs to the lame
To give ears to the deaf
To give mouths to the dumb
To give hairs to the bald
All to be done tomorrow

We drummed and danced
Celebrating our brothers
In khaki and agbada
Whose words we swallowed
Without water

But a century has gone
The lame are still waiting
The blind are still waiting
The sick are still waiting
The deaf are still waiting
The dumb are still waiting
Hasn't the day "tomorrow" come?
When will it come?

DESPAIR

I looked up, there's no sky
I looked, there's no land
I listened, sweet melodies were sigh
My stomach sang one, a bizarre brand
My eyes strained, rays found no rest
Scourged by the lost sweat rivulets to the crest,
The soles that died on the thorn-studded tracks
Hoping at the end, sun could sleekly wax
But there's no sky, let alone the sun
I had my wide-bladed hoe, but no land

I began to withdraw cash without cheques
And breathed by launching financial wrecks
One day, trumpet sounded
My home changed; ceaseless pain abounded
Rivets, fleas, pasting and pungent odour
Became bosom friends I must on end endure
As a victim of gannet leaders who loot
And forget the seed, the future root.

THE TRAVELLER

He was dim and cold
quite ready for the trip
though his bones not old
but must soon drip.

Gathered, his kiths and kin
with fat goats, fowls and cows;
spitting jars of palm wine and gin;
wrappers and woolly hats of grade;
hoe, digger and spade
and all which the custom allows.

With the hoe, spade and digger
they constructed a new bus -double decker
fed the tank well with the palm wine
and the radiator, with the daughters' eyes brine.

The traveller was clad in piles of first class garment;
his cracked feet encased in shoes of sky-high felicity
the ones he never wore until this icy moment
this he knew was a crass duplicity.

His profile was paler than iron dross
those grandiose fineries made his anger gross
but as a man in transit, he folded his lids
not to see their last pretentious bids
he shut his lips well, lest he uttered eerie words
into the blood of the deceit-ridden herds
whose father boarded a bus out of hunger
to the home yonder.

Emmanuel Ejike Abraham

MIDNIGHT WOLF SONGS

When the great Iroko tree fell down
It crashed heavily to the ground
I swear, the sound drove sleep back to its land
Insomnia became my companion

When my clans' men woke at dawn
They slumped to the ground
Gazed for a while
And laughed and laughed
Till tears began to sting their eyes

I laughed too, I cried as well
Hmn! what grief
My ears have suddenly become heavy
Even heavier than Ajanaku the great elephants ears
Aye! My heart is bleeding
As for my heart beat
It is louder than any Ozi players' drum
My limbs have taken root where the great Iroko tree fell
For the sight of it immobilized me

Argh! Somebody help me

For my heart cannot contain what information my ears
have passed to it

It is not true, never!

I shake my head vigorously,

I must erase from my eye and my mind this memory

Iroko tree! Abadikurukuru!

You have cursed us

You used to be our land, our pride

Your branches shaded us

It was under your green canopy

My mama told me moonlight stories

S-o-o-o-oba eh!!! E-e-e-e-eh!!!

Shade us again from sunlight and moonlight

Without you my clan has no name, no face

Tufia! It is not true!

My hands clasp my breast

And I look in awe and wonder

Who did this?

What great wind brought you crashing down?

I heard the sound afar off

I warned oh!

Mba! You refused to listen

Hmmn! Now I mourn, I grieve but I still wait

For the day you will rise to your feet again.

My clans men, Wipe your tears

Abadikurukuru the great Iroko tree still has a giant root
in the soil

Come, get up!

Don't sit on the dust and wail

It is not tears but blessings from our tropical waters

That would resurrect the pride of our land

And then will our maidens sing again

Midnight wolf songs.

Aworabhi Okelani

About the poem

‘Midnight Wolf songs’ This poem is a cry of hope for Nigeria. It talks about a people who lost their dignity due to perilous times and situations. It is a lamentation for what has been lost and a sound of encouragement for future generations to have faith that change will come.

THE HOUSE OF SILENCE

No truth about breakthrough
Is ever near the truth
Than the house of silence
Who alone owned the seed of famousness
And her strength of eyes sees wealth
Of the mind's gold of fruitfulness.
Down depth
Reached, amidst night,
Away day.
The shield of night
Searches
Found fame ray
And block looses amidst night,
Away day.

It's quietness that chases answers right
When man is a prey
On dilemma's seat.
Wisdom, vision, passion sway
To surrender, not to heart thuds

But stay

Accessible to quiet thoughts.

Here's unbroken bone of, vow

Sow

Your life in the school of stillness now

And you shall beat drums with a sickle; wow.

And the most difficult of all life will bow

And many, in your eyes shall see the rainbow.

Benjamin Mwoltok

About the Poem

This poem describe creative thinking (silence)

As the only form of life in which solution to wealth,

happiness and success are reaped.

ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS

Magnus Abraham-Dukuma, Esq

Was born on March 24, 1986. He hails from Ede Town in the Ogba/Egbema/Ndoni Local Government Area of Rivers State. The poet underwent his Legal studies at the Rivers State University of Science and Technology from 2005 to 2011. He proceeded to the Nigerian Law School and was called to the Nigerian Bar as *Barrister, Solicitor and Advocate of the Supreme Court of Nigeria* on November 20, 2012. He is also a product of the Garden City Literary Festival, rechristened Port Harcourt Book Festival. He is single and presently engaged in private legal practice in Port Harcourt.

Ogedengbe Tolulope. A native of Ilesa. He was born over two decades ago to the renowned extended family of Ogedengbe Agbogunboro in Ijesa land. He is a student of the prestigious Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife studying Chemical Engineering.

Benjamin Mwoltok

Hails from Ngaal, kerang in Mangu L.G.A of Plateau state. He attended L.E.A, primary school, Ngaal (1994-1999), M.C.S.S kerang(1999-2005) and C.O.E, Gindiri(2005-2008). He is happily married with one child and currently resides in Abuja, working as a teacher.

Emmanuel Ejike Abraham

He hails from Okoffia, Ezza South Ebonyi State. He is 27 years old. He studied English Language at FCT College of Education Zuba, Abuja. He has authored the novel "Waiting for the Hangman" in 2012 and currently working on others. He teaches inmates.

Okelani Aworahbi

A young woman with a flare and natural talent for writing. Her style of writing is mostly free verse, she writes about nature, love, people, experiences and pressing societal topics like, religion, politics, gender equality, race and lots more. She has been writing poetry and fictional prose since she was 6 years old and has a deep desire to see her work published internationally.

Although vastly knowledgeable in science, bagging a Master's Degree in Renewable Energy Technology and a bachelor's degree in Geology, Art is her first love. As she always says to people who wonder about her writing skills [science is in her brain, but art is in her blood]. She has inspired by love for nature and the environment. Her role models are great African writers like Ama Ata Aidoo, Gabriel Okara, Chinua Achebe and Christopher Okigbo. Other modern writers like ZainabuJallo have also inspired her to write and speak to the world through the pen rather than violence.

Benstowe, Fubaraibi Anari

Was born on the 4th of August 1991 into the Family of Warisenibo Anari Benstowe in Great Grand Bonny kingdom, an Island in Rivers State Nigeria.

In 2011 he obtained his Advanced Diploma in international Vocational Qualification of London in Electrical Installation from Bonny Vocational Centre in Bonny Kingdom.

Currently a 200 Level Electrical/Electronic Engineering Student of Niger Delta University Wilberforce Island

in Bayelsa State who believes his poetry can change the world positively.

In December 2012, His poem “Iria-Bibitewas shortlisted in the “52 years After” Nigerian International poetry competition and in March 2013 the poem “Ngelenge” and others poems was shortlisted in the Rising voices Nigerian/Zimbabwean international poetry competition.

His poetry works have appeared in different International anthologies, local newspaper and magazines, which include the Silent Voices Anthology- a publication of the Society of Young Nigerian writers in collaboration with the Girl Child Creativity Concept, Zimbabwe, the 52 Years after Poetry Anthology- an Initiative of the Orange Crush Project 2013, and in the African eyeball Anthology -a publication of Poetry Club MoshoodAbiola Polytechnic, Abeokuta.