

# Tevin Muendo

(LONDON BASED POET)

**Tevin what inspires you to write poems for strangers?**

SO, INTERESTINGLY I HAVE BEEN WRITING POETRY FOR AROUND 7 YEARS, IT STARTED WHEN I WAS INSPIRED AT MY UNDERGRADUATE UNIVERSITY. I WAS AT A POETRY SLAM NIGHT, MY FIRST I'VE EVER ATTEND, AND OH MAN, THE RHYTHM THESE PEOPLE HAD, THE HUMOUR, THE SUBJECT MATTER, I'D NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS, AND THERE WAS A PARTICULAR POEM CALLED 'LIVERPOOL JUST SCORED AGAIN', THAT KEPT REVERBERATING AROUND MY MIND. FOLLOWING THIS, I WENT HOME, AND TRIED TO PUT PEN TO PAPER. AT THE TIME I STARTED THERE WAS A LOT OF DARKNESS IN MY UNIVERSITY, STUDENT SUICIDE WAS HIGH AND THERE WERE INCIDENTS OF STUDENT DEATHS WHICH LED TO A VERY SOMBRE ATMOSPHERE. SO THE FIRST POEM I WROTE CALLED 'ALONE IN A CROWD', WAS A REFLECTION OF THIS.

NEEDLESS TO SAY, THE FEELING OF BEING ABLE TO PUT MY FEELINGS ON PAGE, REAL, TRUE FEELINGS, BUT THEN IMBUE IT WITH AN ARTISTIC TWANG, RHYME, METRE, HUMOUR ETC. WAS SO THRILLING FOR ME, AND IT SEEMS AS IF THE WORDS JUST FLOWED THROUGH ME I WAS HOOKED.



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SO I STARTED WRITING A LOT OF POEMS IN MY NOTEPAD AND MY NOTES APP, AND SHARING THEM WITH MY FAMILY. I STARTED ATTENDING POETRY SLAMS AND PERFORMING AT EVENTS IN DURHAM AND IN LONDON, WITH A POEM OF MINE BEING PUBLISHED IN 'THE NORTHERN REVIEW', A SMALL ARTS PAPER IN DURHAM.

FLASH FORWARD AND I MET AN AWESOME ITALIAN POET, FEDERICA, WHO WRITERS WITH A TYPEWRITER, SHE WROTE ME AN AMAZING POEM, AND IN RETURN I WROTE HER ONE, MY RELOVE FOR POETRY WAS BORN. AND I HAVEN'T LOOKED BACK SINCE. ON THE STREET, THE INSPIRATION IS VERY MUCH THE UNIQUE SOUL AND STORY THAT I MEET AND HERE, WRITERS BLOCK DOESN'T EXIST, AS EVERYONE I MEET IS A BRIGHT BEACON OF KNOWLEDGE AND YARN TO SPIN.

## What is your favourite book?

I REALLY LIKE "THE KITE RUNNER", "RUN BABY RUN", "ON THE ROAD", AND "1984" BY GEORGE ORWELL. ALTHOUGH NOT POETRY BOOKS OFFICIALLY, THEY DEFINITELY HAVE SOME PARTS OF THE STORY, OR QUOTES/ PHRASES WHICH FOR ME ARE PROFOUNDLY POETIC.

SOMEONE THAT STOPPED BY MY POETRY STALL RECOMMENDED AN AWESOME BOOK THE OTHER DAY, CALLED THE "POETRY PHARMACY", IT HAS A POEM PRESCRIBED FOR EVERY FEELING YOU CAN HAVE FROM LOVE, TO HAPPINESS TO SADNESS. IT'S VERY AWESOME, SHOUT OUT TO THIS WOMAN WHO PASSED BY!

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## Which Poets inspire you?

I REALLY LIKE EDGAR ALLEN POE'S 'THE RAVEN'. THE RHYMING SCHEME AND LANGUAGE USED IS FASCINATING AND SIMILAR TO MY STYLE. THE SIMPSONS ALSO DID AN EPISODE ON IT, WHICH IS HILARIOUS, YOU SHOULD CHECK IT OUT! I LOVE "THE HIGHWAYMAN", "THE JABBERWOCKY", "BE DRUNK" AND GENERALLY POEMS THAT TELL ALMOST A FAIRYTALE-LIKE STORY BUT MAINTAIN AWESOME RHYME AND METRE.

AS FOR MODERN POETS AND POEMS THAT INSPIRE ME I REALLY LIKE: „WILD GEESE“ - MARY OLIVER, "A SMALL NEEDFUL FACT" BY ROSS GAY AND "THE ISLAND WITHIN" BY RICHARD NELSON. THESE ARE FUN AND ARE DIFFERENT TO MY USUAL STYLE WITH RHYMING PATTERNS, THEY ALSO HIT HARD IN THE EMOTIONS.

## Can you recommend any Poetry Events in London?

UNFORTUNATELY, I HAVE NOT SEEN THAT MANY. I'M RE-ENTERING THIS SPACE, AND I'M EXCITED TO DISCOVER MORE. I REMEMBER I ATTENDED AN AWESOME READING AT GREEN ALLEY STUDIOS NEAR CAMBRIDGE HEATH, THAT MY FRIENDS RUN! THEY DON'T HAPPEN OFTEN BUT DEFINITELY CHECK IT OUT IF THEY THROW ANOTHER ONE.

I'M ALSO HOPING TO START MY OWN EVENT SOON! BUT IT'S A SURPRISE, I'M EXCITED TO REVEAL.

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**Tevin my next Groupshow is about women “re-rosing”, rerooting, rewilding with their true feminine self. Whats your personal opinion; do men play a key role in this journey?**

I BELIEVE MEN HAVE A ROLE IN SO FAR AS WE NEED TO MAKE SURE WE ARE DOING ALL WE CAN TO AID IN THE FLOURISHING OF WOMEN. FOR TOO LONG WE HAVE ENJOYED THE BENEFITS OF THE WORD, WHILST LEAVING WOMEN AT THE LURCH, AND ESSENTIALLY HAVING THEM FLOOD THE WORLD WITH TENDERNESS AND THE GOOD ASPECTS OF SOCIETY. IT IS VERY MUCH OUR DUTY TO MAKE SURE THAT WOMEN ARE EMBRACED POSITIVELY AT EVERY ASPECT OF THEIR “RE-ROSING”, REROOTING AND REWILDING AND INSTEAD OF BEING TREATING THEM WITH SUSPICION, WE NEED TO MAKE SURE THAT THEY ARE EMPOWERED, AND THOSE MEN WHO HOLD POSITIONS OF SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL POWER SHOULD DO ALL THEY CAN TO MODIFY SOCIETY TO BE ABLE TO ALLOW IT. THEY MUST MAKE THE SOIL OF SOCIETY FERTILE FOR THE WOMEN TO BEAR THEIR BEAUTIFUL FRUIT.