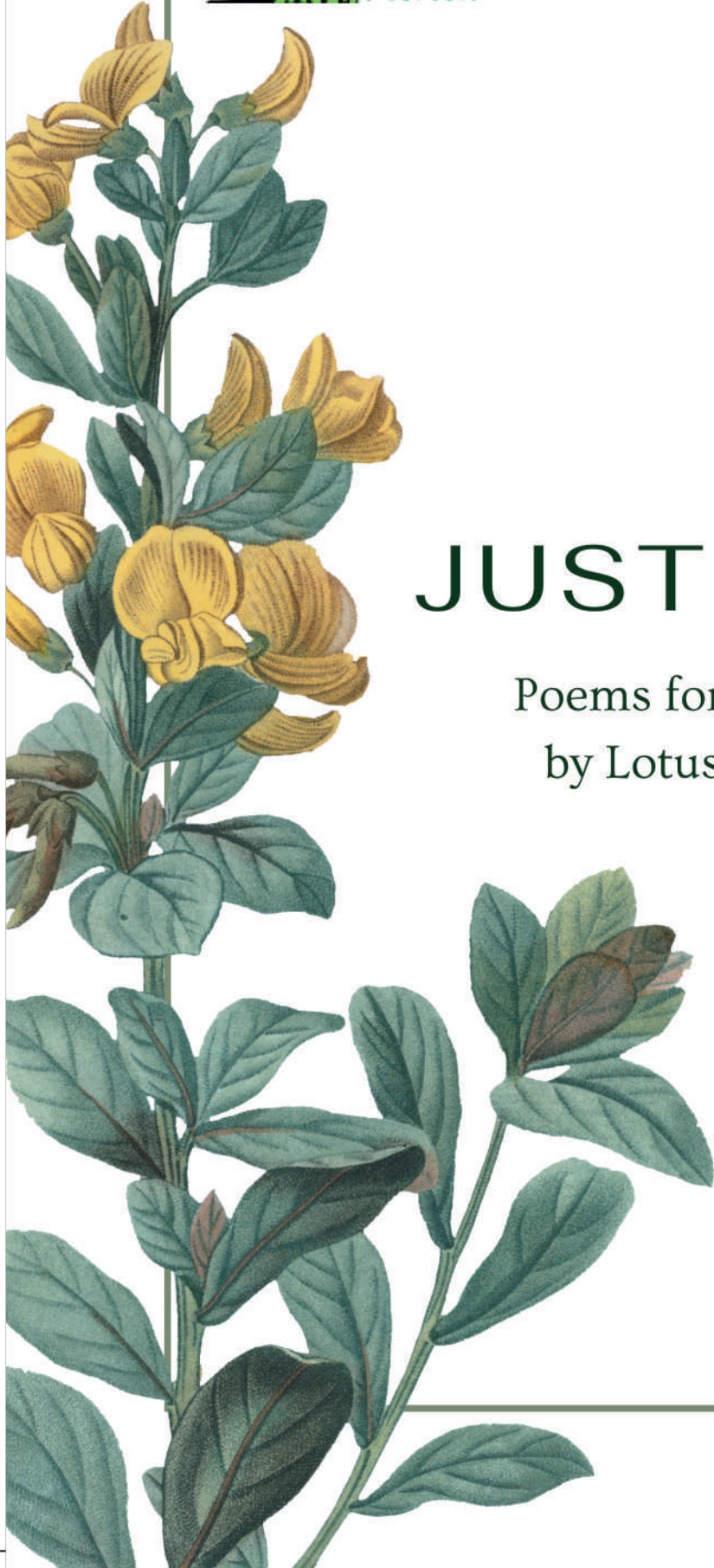




JUST EARTH

Poems for Princess Vlei
by Lotus High School



THE POETS

Aden Jones

Alyssa Jones

Craig De Vries

Deirdre Louw

Jade Witbooi

Jemima Daries

Jiyaad Riley

Lance Bleding

Mickah Jacobs

Nashiekah Louw

Paige Eden

Pimada Polwen

Sibahlle Sikota

Tracy Daniels

Yumnah Abbas

Ziah Booysen

Creative Writing Facilitator:

Toni Giselle Stuart

INTRODUCTION



Just Earth is this year's theme for the Princess Vlei Forum's annual parade. PVF invited me to run poetry workshops with learners at Lotus High School, to create poems for and about the vlei.

We met for four afternoons: Monday to Thursday October 16 to 19. On the first day, we spent time at the vlei, writing through our senses and how we felt. On the other days, we met in the school's beautiful garden - all made, grown and built by members of the Eco-Club, led by their teacher Shafiek Isaacs. On Saturday October 21st, six poets shared their poems as part of the parade events.

Thank you to Denisha Anand, Emma Oliver and Bridget Pitt of the Princess Vlei Forum for inviting poetry in and creating this opportunity for us.

Thank you to Shafiek Isaacs and Ms Petersen of Lotus High School for all of the behind-the-scenes support and logistics to get the learners to sessions, getting them home safely & making sure we are taken care of.

Thank you to all the poets who dedicated their time after school, committed to the process, and had the courage to write these poems and express themselves. I have loved meeting you all, getting to know you a little and writing with you. A very special thank you to Deirdre Louw, Paige Eden, Ziah Booysen, Jade Witbooi, Nashieka Louw and Tracy Daniels for performing your poems at the parade.

I hope that you all feel proud of yourselves, and that you will continue writing. Thank you too, for all you do to take care of the earth and protect it for future generations.

With joy and gratitude,
Toni Giselle Stuart

~poet, performer & creative writing teacher~

SITTING AT THE VLEI

The cool breeze
feel like laughing
The birds chirping
sun shining upon us
I feel calm and relaxed

–Deirdre

I feel relieved and comfortable
blowing wind, water is flowing
insects are walking on me and
birds are flying all over me

–Jemima

Sitting at the vlei
wind blowing through my clothes
the sun shining on plants
calm and at peace with myself
sand under my shoes
insects walking over my shoes
restlessness of wanting to walk around

–Lance

sitting at the vlei, I feel proud of what it has
accomplished
sitting at the vlei, I feel like doing it all day
sitting at the vlei, I feel drawn to the earth
sitting at the vlei, I feel so calm, peaceful and free
sitting at the vlei, I feel at ease

–Paige

I feel connected to nature
It makes me feel like I belong
I feel like I could stay away from electronics
Nature needs to be protected
and should be cherished
I feel calm and collected
I think the vlei needs to be protected

–Mickah

Relaxing at the vlei is the best thing ever.
You don't need to worry about anything.
You're all on your own.
Sitting at the vlei I feel free and happy.
Your mind wondering around and
watching birds looking at plants

–Nashiekah

I am sitting at the vlei
I feel comfortable at the vlei
where there is peace and quiet
the sun is shining in my face
I can see the beautiful mountain
and the wind is blowing my page

–Jade

place of harmony
best place to walk when I'm alone
actually calms me
makes me forget about what I go through
very peaceful

–Ziah

I feel much better that I'm here
I feel like I've found here
that missing part of me
I can communicate and interact better
with my missing piece
I've reached my destination
where she belongs

–Sibahle

The wind is blowing through my hair
That the grass and long leaves blows too
I feel calm being here
I feel like standing up and blowing in the wind
I feel like I want to stay

–Tracey



WHERE I SING

I will always sing
That is a part of me killing the feeling of anxiety
where the breeze calms the feeling inside of me
walking through nature
looking at what's surrounding me

Singing high notes
as the indigenous plants growing in front of me
Princess Vlei,
the place where I would always want to be
where the feeling of freedom consumes me
there's no thought of poverty
or the crimes of society

Just the sound of river beams
and birds singing. no gunshots and cars
screaming
just the sound of song that I sing
with the wind blowing beside me

—Nashiekah

MEETING THE PRINCESS

Ants walking through sand
flower petals
grass blades making patterns as the wind blows
through
blue sky stretching over the distance
bees flying over
hot sands burning under my feet
a variety of plants covering the land
tall trees making shade
hot sun giving energy to plants
a butterfly flying over the bushes
dead plants laying shrubs
small plants all over the fynbos

— Lance

HAIKUS

planting the princess

in love with nature
sand and plants are in my palms
all indigenous – Ziah

While fingers in sand
I want to bring back what was
and what used to be –Paige

laughing with your friend
planting at the vlei, making
sitting on your knees –Jade

I'm all on my own
I like helping at a garden
put my hands in soil –Nashiekah

wetland sounds

The seagull calling around
I hear the water splashing
all grass wiggling –Nashiekah

Sunbirds tweet as they fly
the waves crossing each other
cars driving on tar –Paige

sound of a red knob coot
soft wind blowing through the trees
the cars that drive passed –Ziah

I can hear the sunbirds
tweeting, chirping as they fly
green grass rustling –Jade

protecting our future

To care for the next
knowing how herbs are good for health
it is better to live – Ziah

how are we gonna
live without trees
when they relieve stress from our
shoulders?
–Nashiekah

It is important
we can get more oxygen – Jade

spread the word for a
better future, bring more life
to beautiful earth –Paige

JUST EARTH

A GROUP POEM

I hear the sound of a red knobbed coot
sunbirds tweeting, chirping as they fly
the seagull calling around

soft wind blowing through the trees
I hear the water splashing,
waves crossing each other

green grass rustling and wiggling
cars driving on tar

sun shining on me
I feel calm and relaxed

connected to nature
It makes me feel that I belong

*

in love with nature,
we put our hands in the soil

sitting on our knees,
laughing with a friend
insects walking over us

sand and plants are in our palms:
all indigenous

planting at the vlei
helping at a garden

we want to bring back what was
and what used to be

*

how are we gonna
live without trees
when they relieve stress from our shoulders?

It is important
to care for the next
knowing how herbs are good for health

spread the word:
it is better to live
bring more life to beautiful earth



OCTOBER 2023
POETRY FOR THE PRINCESS

PRINCESS VLEI FORUM

www.princessvlei.org

LOTUS HIGH SCHOOL

Facebook: Lotus High School

