

The Flute - African Urban Echoes

Salawu Olajide
May 10, 2023



The Flute:

African Urban Echoes

CALL FOR SUBMISSION

Sub Guidelines:

- Send three poems or two images with the subject line: "African Urban Echoes"
- Write us a note on what has inspired you to write this poem.
- We prefer MS Doc attachment
- Include your bio in the body of the email.
- Send submission to:
africanurban69@yahoo.com

We plan towards compensation for contributors.

Deadline: **Sept 1, 2023**

Editors: **Olájidé Salawu**
and **Rasaq Malik**

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In the words of Nigerian poet, Odia Ofeimuna, "A city is like a poem. You enter it and you enter into a world of concentrated time." Odia's observation makes us think of the city as malleable, changing from time to time, switching tempo from moment to moment. The African city, we guess, can be *fast and uncanny*, and can offer the balm when we walk in its faith. The question then is, is the city like a poem? What kind of poem does the city produce to reimagine Henri Lefebvre, what kind of city does the poem produce? With a focus on African cities as an urban capture with many *Surrounds*, as described by Simone Abdoumalig, we are thinking of how these urban centers carry the heritage of colonial violence in their walls, roofs, texture, and rhythms. How can we create stories that inspire a lifeworld not of struggles to counter the normativized narratives of African urbanity? What other forms of city do we have and hope to live in? We also imagine the South Africa urban poet Mongane

Wally Serote chanting fervently against the darkness of Johannesburg as we deliberate on the “Sorrows of the Black City” in Muhammad al-Fayturi’s poetry. There are many questions African cities ask us, that we have not been able to answer.

For this reason, we are proposing our answer through the genre of poetry and photography and the energy of image that these forms possess. We define African Urban Echoes as the flute of the city, the noise of the people at the park, the bus conductor shouting on top of his voice, the rhythm of the night taxi cab and the car honking games. We realize that in these echoes there is resistance, hope, and anxieties all produced simultaneously. Our inspiration is guided by the power of art to transmit hope out of the bleak stories of African urban governance. But in seeking these remedies, we welcome all evocations of the challenges that the African cities embody, we believe the time is now to listen to the echo, melody, dissonance, and assonance that parse cities. We therefore invite poets to address us in sublime words and images as we steer the complex course of the African streets. We want poems on Lagos, Accra, Kinshasa, Lonligwe, Durban, Marrakesh, Nairobi, Ouagadougou, Dakar, Luanda, Yaounde, and so on.

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