

AMINA ATIQ
YEMENI-BRITISH POET, CREATIVE-EDUCATIONAL TEACHING ARTIST AND AWARD-
WINNING COMMUNITY ACTIVIST

Biography

Awarded Steve Biko Young Achievers, featured 100 Inspirational Women of Merseyside, Future List 2022 of Northern Woman awards and finalist of BBC Words First. Currently sits on the Anti-racist board for Curious Minds & Diversity Action Group for the Liverpool Everyman & Playhouse Theatres and Critical Friends Group at Liverpool Biennial.

Former artist of *Weston Jerwood Creative*, *Humboldt Foundation Residency* (Germany), *Roots & Routes* (Germany & Holland), Erasmus+ Theatre-markers for Social Change (Hungary), *Queensland Poetry Festival* (Australia), *Imperial War Museum*, Poet in residence University College of London & Norfolk Ponds Project working on *the secret Life of Ponds* and *Museum of Colour, These Things Matter* Exhibition & Guest Poet of MANX Lit-fest 2024 and many more.

Currently facilitator for the National Literacy Trust delivering social action workshops in schools across the UK. Writer for the co-creation project Voices Weaving in collaboration with Composer Michael Betteridge & Community Choir participants from Asylum Link Liverpool. Supporting The University of Liverpool: Music Reminiscence and Community Wellbeing on Merseyside project. Lead Facilitator for Liverpool Arab Arts festival education programme in collaboration with Qatar Foundation International.

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Publications found at Critical Muslim | 40 Biography, *Muslim Institute and Hurst Publishers*. **We Have Also Survived: Poetry as a Tool for Resistance in Humanitarian Crises Around the World.** Speaking Volumes: **Not Quite Right For Us.** Queensland Poetry Festival: **Cordite Poetry Review.** Wrecking Ball, Wrecking Ball Press: **Use Words First.** Sutton Manor: **Just Beyond Reach.** The Double Negative: **John Moore's Painting Prize 2020.** The Independent: **The Death of the Face Yemen's Humanitarian Crisis.** Whispering Dialogue: **Passing through Two States.** **Who We Are: 24 brilliant texts to enrich your KS3 English curriculum, Collins.**

Featured on Poetry Please, BBC 4 Radio, Arab News, Cordite Poetry Review, Queensland Poetry Festival: Use Words First (Wrecking Ball Press), BBC Bitesize: *A Letter to My Mother*, John Moores Painting Prize 2020 (The Double Negative), A Lovely Poetry Festival, The Independent, Just Beyond Reach (Sutton Manor, Metal Southend), Not Quite Right for Us (Flipped Eye Publisher, Speaking Volumes), TEDx Liverpool: *My Home-Heart Land*. The Portico Library: *Rewriting the North*. Campaigning Against the Arms Trade: A Portrait of Resistance. British Muslim Tv: @the Warehouse, and many more .

Poetry, Activism & History: 'Writing the Future, Reclaiming the Past'



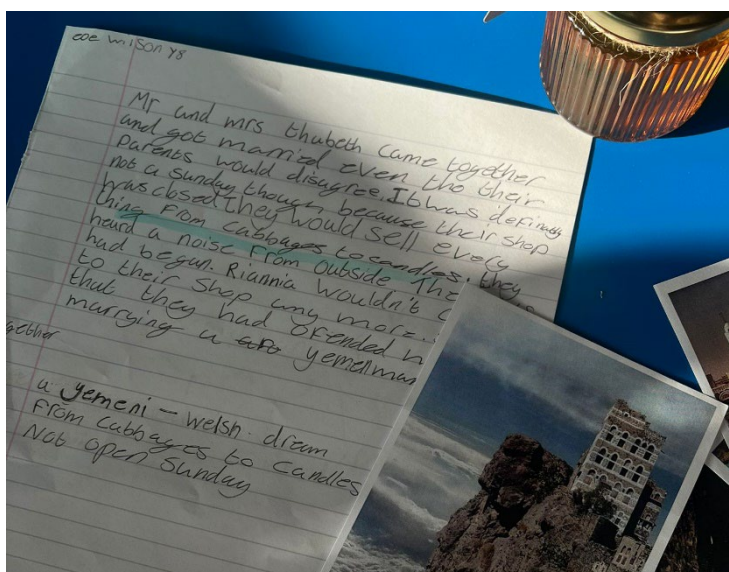
Unpacking Archive: Yemen to Liverpool

Yemenis have been an integral part of Liverpool's social fabric for over a century, particularly since the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when many Yemeni immigrants arrived as sailors, traders, and labourers. As a teaching artist facilitating cultural and creative workshops in schools, I developed and delivered the *History in a Box* archive, designed to help school children explore Yemeni history and migration to the UK. This initiative was part of the cultural education programme for the Liverpool Arab Arts Festival, funded by the Qatari Foundation International.

<https://www.arabartsfestival.com/cultural-education-programme/>

This archive was developed over the past ten years through extensive creative research within my practice, driven by my interest in Yemeni heritage in the UK. It began after I interviewed my grandmother, Hayle, as part of the DaDa International Festival. This interview has been shown in schools to explore oral history as a form of documentation.

The project was delivered at Childwall Sports & Science Academy for two groups, including a SEND group. Over six weeks, their writing was developed into a group poem to showcase their learning. As a poet who has been writing about Yemeni heritage and advocating for positive visibility of Yemeni history—often misrepresented in mainstream media—it brings me joy to see young people in schools writing about a place they once knew little about.



Poem: By Student at Childwall Sports and Science Academy

They Stole my Gift

How I came to you—you drink of me,
do you know my riches? How sweet I taste?

I travel from far—are my pockets too heavy?
Too rich, too tasteful, they caved to the devil's drink.
Give your energy to me, a gift from heaven.

Arab poets write in black ink of love for Mocha,
once a thriving port, the richest taste of a thousand years,
trading around the world, telling stories of spices,
honey, and coffee.

Day and night, Yemeni farmers toil,
the sun burns their soft skin, blisters on their feet.
Behind every sip is a story unknown to us.

From the Dutch smuggling to racism,
in Latin, the French spoke ill—
they failed to honor the true owners of discovery.

Yemen, Yemen, where did you come from?
What secrets do you hide?

If only I were a sailor, I would search
the deepest oceans, find the most beautiful
stories, prove to the world that there is life—
Yemeni merchant sailors traveling the seas,
selling and bartering goods.

Many arrived in England, not knowing
what life would be like. After WWII,
many discharged, made this country
their home for generations to come.

A Yemeni Welsh dream
from cabbages to candles,
not open on Sundays. A single picture,
if you look closer, you see the people's history.

If I were a sailor, I would split the sea in half,
hoping to make it to the next chapter.

Yemen, Yemen, where did you come from?
What secrets do you hide?