Poetry Series

Cheryl Griffith

- 34 poems -

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Cheryl Griffith (January 2nd 1966)

I am co-author of Book Caribbean Spice. Published and sold in Trinidad and Tobago. I also have a CD on sale in Trinidad named 'Eros' Its a CD about love, the various faces of love. It is a mixture of poetry, music and singing all about love and its ups and downs. All the poems on the CD is written by me, I also have some of my friends on my CD performing some of my work. Its a CD loved by everyone who heard it. I am also twice winner of a national poetry competition in my country. I do performance poetry at various venues in my country. I sometimes do poetry work shop at schools. I am at presenting completing a BA in Literature and Communication. I love people and life and it is this love that drives me to write.

Works:

co-author of Book 'Caribbean Spice' Three Voices Three Sisters Three Expressions.

A Poet is Born

Sliding onto ivory sheets he screams
The obscurity of unfamiliar faces
And loud voices made him afraid
Cut off from that place which all this time had kept him safe
A watery space that once housed his fragile body
The ambiguity of his existence made him dizzy
Oh perhaps; the world is spinning faster than he imagine
Already thoughts and ideas impregnate his potent brain
His head heavy with the weight of reality
Of the death he must live and the life he must kill
Of war, hunger, famine, disease,
Of greed, and foolish power hungry men
Forever searching for euphoria
In a world where mammon is God
He thinks of the womb and weeps, sicken with nostalgia
Propped upon his mother's breast
Heartbeat reverberating,
Hammering hard against his minute chest
A poet is born, and he lies silent and very afraid

Cheryl Griffith

A Season of Guns and Blood

It's a season of guns and blood
Cruelty hides under white hoods
Oh some praying will be wise
To stir our faith and slow demise
But faith dries like fire wood
It's a season of guns and blood

We once walked paradise road
Memory eases not the load
Our sunken hearts now lost for words
It's a season of guns and blood

Justice here once stood
Now violence rises like a flood
Hope lays back and takes a nod
While we sit by and chew our cuds
And wobble through our daily mud
It's a season of guns and blood

Cheryl Griffith

Acrostic

(The Yellow Poui Tree)

Poetry comes to me
On the liquid breeze of creation
Egged on by the perfumed glaze of summer
Trinity beauty sermonizing my soul
Reaching heaven's nose, to clothe the earth in
Yellow splendour

Cheryl Griffith

After The Drought

Then the rain came; crystal bullets penetrating dry clay;
Rattling fragile rooftops pouring out a noisy silence.
Among the grass a puppy bleeds;
Crying out to his mother; he screams
His pleading voice drowned by the noisy silence
As he lies there dying.
Young squirrels and rabbits struck with fear,
Seek refuge between some trees motionless,
As though guarding the black silence that surrounds
And threatens to engulf all who listen.
The rain surges and rumbles;
With every fiery strike and thunder clap
The earth shakes and trembles
The trees sway and murmur, rooted in their anger,
With leave-like hands slapping furiously at the wind;
And wrestling against the beating of the rain
Which seems to fall forever.
Mute birds tired of repeating yesterday's terror, huddle together in the recess of their corners;
Heads turned from the world facing each other.
Fishes float up-turned in a small pool in the hollows
There emerges a faint mist tracing its way upwards,
To caress the chipped feet of a martyr
Whose main achievement; was to die too soon.
The darkness forms fully
The long black night begins
Still, by the lake a young girl waits,
Hunch under a wrecked shed
Watching with horror, the violent down pouring,
And listening to the silences.

Cheryl Griffith

BETRAYAL OF A FRIEND

What's that scent that fouls the air
Its poisonous stench I can hardly bear
What's that I see before me there
Flickering in the dark
From the corner of my eyes
I glimpse its ugly sight
Could it be?

What taste so bitter on my tongue
Words I can hardly utter
A dreadful feeling in my chest
That causes my heart to flutter
Could it be?

What's this I feel dripping
Now pouring from my eyes
Could it be?
The ugly emptiness
Of a vital human loss
The tainted twisted feeling
Of a disillusioned mind
A savage tug at my heartstrings
Causing it to rend
Could it be?
Betrayal my friend?

Cheryl Griffith

Come Love

Come love
Come with swift wings
And quick surprise
Crashing through my darkness
Through my night
Shine on me like a new dawn
As I arise and dry my eyes

Cheryl Griffith

Considering Heaven

You must consider eternity
And heaven and its pearly gates
Though evil brings such calamity
Let disaster only spur your faith.

Free from burdens
And all cares of life
Escaping hell's horrors and earthly strife.
To gaze with wonderment at beauty sudden

Such pleasures are worth a thousand woes
And passions spawn in blood and bone
And the sun that so frailly hove
Can shine no brighter than his throne.

Oh but a prayer for those doomed
Oh that heaven comes real soon.

Cheryl Griffith

Gratitude To Life

As I sit here in serene cerebration
Surveying beauty of sky wind and trees
And roots parting grass
The laughter of children playing
Intruding upon my loneliness
Joy burns a place into my heart
And I think of the wasted moments
Of tears and sadness that have passed

As I inhale the cool plenary air
The sweet essence of possibilities
The sun radiating golden on my ebony skin
The birds serenading on high
The wind caressing my face like a gentle kiss
Purging my soul into glorious bliss
I think to myself intoxicated by it all
How fortunate I am to be here
A part of this time, this sphere
This world with all its joys and woes
And witness its mystery like a bud unfolds

My tattered spirit inert by frailty
Beckons nature's harmony
Blue, green scenery and flower beds yields serenity
Buds of beauty busting forth
Lends fragrance to the stench of the pain
And sadness of humanity
I smile as joy now perforate my pain
Penetrating the sad blisters in my brain
Nature in her wisdom has thought me much
To be grateful for such
That I have felt pain and tasted bitter rain
And with it, ecstasy the euphoria of nature's celestial glory
To know that I have laughed and love, and was loved
And at the end to know that I have lived!

Cheryl Griffith

Haiku

Love comes by softly
On fragrant breath saunters in
Forever you change.

Cheryl Griffith

I'm A Poet

I wanted to write a poem
But words evaded me
And ideas escaped my mental spectrum
I thought and thought again
Of what to say
But everything was said and said
Of right and wrong, good and evil
Peace and war, religion and God,
love and lovers and sad, happy songs
Nothing is new under the sun

I tried to devise a verse
Something new that was never heard
But every thought was old
Like that old man seated next to me
With creases and lines upon his face
And thin, white, sparse hair upon his head
Sticking out like spikes
Like the lines and space of differences that separate the races
Like the spikes that sometimes prick our hearts
But not enough for change
Same old yesterday, same misery and pain upon his face
Same old lies, same misunderstanding, same old fears
Same political games keep playing
Same injustice inflicted upon the same people
And from forefathers to forefathers
Same old tears crying
And I wondered why
And how can we embrace new still holding onto the old
So what then? Should I lock-up vision, box-in my imagination,
And swallowing words and punctuation become dumb
Should I lock-up paper and pen
Until then, until change?
Then I remembered, I'm a poet

Cheryl Griffith

Life

The audience applauds
The actor proudly makes his bow
It's quite easy to tell
The actor had done well
How well he learnt his lines
How hard he worked to get it right

Each day he burnt the midnight oil
Like others, he too must toil
The audience patiently waits
Till next day he climbs the stage
To leave the same in humble grace
No thought then for time spent
Like everything else, the act must end
And even after the curtains fall
You can still hear the audience call

There'll be other days
And other plays
Some will cheer, some criticize
Others laugh, while others cry
He learnt to accept their sneers
Their cheers, their jeers
He learnt to accept the fact
Life is just one big act

Cheryl Griffith

Loss Of Innocence

Give me your hand child
This world is filled with too much weeping
More than you could understand

Oh child
I watched you sleeping and I cried
Then you awoke and embraced the world
With joyful greetings
Smiling sweetly as you play
Bouncing and leaping

Oh child
In your innocence you hold tomorrow
Wrapped in tiny fingernails and toes
So much I need to tell you child
But I must wait, for you are young
And we both speak in a different tongue

Oh child
You see everything through pure eyes
And time is not kind
So sorry that now you must learn
This cruel world tells lies

Cheryl Griffith

Love Has Wings

Love has wings ready to fly
Oh love, linger a while
Rest Your tired wings
on the branch of my heart
Why? why must you wander?
Why do you stare bright eye at the sky?

If you must leave, then go!
I release you, go
Run wild through green grass and open fields
And when you're tired running, soar
Fly, fly, my butterfly

I release you because I love you
Go then, go
And I will go on without you
My love can never clip such wild wings
They were made to be free
So I tell myself
Standing here missing you
Looking at shadows
And staring at the dust of your wings

Cheryl Griffith

LOVE IS A ROSE

Love is a Rose that blooms
With open arms she welcomes the sun
She arise with early beauty at the wake of dawn
She yawns, stretching her body young and free
The Sun smiling handsomely
As she glows in the heat of his passion
She sways with emotion
What rain is there to cool this heat
A passion so surging sweet
With gently hands, he caresses her rosy cheeks
As he whispers softly in her ear
Their love open and bare
Each day she dances to the music
Blowing tranquil in the wind, enticing her lover
Each day eager to prove their love for each other
Their love glowing, growing, filling
Till one day she says goodbye
Even beautiful Roses die
So the sun at Eve restlessly sleeps
And mournfully, he weeps
Only to find at the wake of dawn
A beautiful Rose in bloom
Stretching her body young and free
She yawns and soon,
She'll grow to know, to feel the passion, the heat
Willingly she gives her heart, her soul
A love so pure and bold
Love is a rose, love is eternal

Cheryl Griffith

Love Lures

I am afraid to dream of love
Not the way lovers do
Or even think as much
Lest it torment my heart
and tempt my soul, I know of such

I'm afraid to let my heart feel
It is better numb or dead
Than feel something that may never be
I know such miseries

Still, my heart continues to feel for you
An intense, surging need for you
And what am I to do
with this dream I'm dreaming
The passion it brings
The sting of the fire that burns
My flesh, my skin

Do you understand this woman's yearning?
Or the depth of love I'm feeling?
Oh love, sweet love, sweet agony
What pain, what pleasures awaits me?
Yet, I'm thankful for little blessings
To have dream a dream
And feel these feelings
For the few and short meetings and partings
And the many passions in-between.

Cheryl Griffith

Love on Paper

I must approach you woman
With slow strides and careful words
So for now I linger with pen and paper
Longing to spill my desires; rid this fever;
And drain my heart of all expressions
Expressions of you my Queen
Of you and I and all the in-betweens
But for now I linger with pen and paper

Not willing to rush too soon into your bosom
Or thrust into your fire; forgetting time
Let your flames fine-tune my passionate rhymes
So for now I linger with pen and paper

The dark is here my queen
The day is done and I am worn
I long to lie between your life-giving thighs
And be re-born
I long to drink you in
And wrap myself in your satin skin
Let your laughter wash me
Rinse the taint of yesterday
As I sip you slowly
You are the colour of night my queen full of mystery
I am hypnotized by your beauty
And words don't come easy nor sentences smoothly
So for now I linger with pen and paper

Cheryl Griffith

Love Pursues Me

Love pursues me
Over high hills and valleys
Love pursues me
Until he finds me
And leaves me breathless

Cheryl Griffith

Man

Time-bound fragile clay
Destiny's soldiers
Stabbing the icy heart of time
Though you reign triumphantly
Ashes is your end

Cheryl Griffith

Ode

You went without a warning thus
And left my soul to time and dust
A thing so pure that once blossom and bud
Is now sadly, a dried up pod

Oh, you came with such charm and style,
Glaze with smiles to beguile.
Now only darkness linger here,
A flickering shadow of what once was there.

I sought restlessly through time and space,
To stand bravely before your face
And hope you have pity as I plea;
Give back that which you stole from me.

The smile that once adorn my face
A spirit so free and full of grace
A child-like laughter and heart so pure
The me that all once adore.

I've covered all mirrors in and around,
My heart only murmur without song or sound.
Oh, where's the face I once look upon?
The kiss, the smile that once greet the morn.

There's a darkness stirring deep within,
And evil gives a silent grin,
As I muster one last plea;
Give back that which you stole from me.

Cheryl Griffith

Pen Dance

My pen bops and moves in slow cadence
To the soft throb of melodic words
Inviting poetry Come
Partake in this great celebration
Of freedom and sovereignty
Earned from fiery struggles
Burnt into our history like cane
Not by fame or favour
But with sweat and fortitude
For love of country this freedom came
In sleepless nights and endless toil
To battle rule of crown
Fathers of our nation, brothers of our soil
You who travail with determination and triumph
Hurdling systems of political barriers
And fierce foreign strife
To liberate this country
From clutch of colony
How your tears must have flowed
To bring us this liberty
Though, now silenced into the night
And in your peaceful eminence lie
Yet still, your coat of glory wears
It's my prayer that you will hear
It is for you I do this pen dance
Like a flag, I raise this poem high
Hail, accept my gratitude and praise

Cheryl Griffith

Poetry is For Lovers

Poetry is for lovers like you and me
who marvel at the artistry of the pen
The skill of the verses that rhyme
And the mystery in-between the lines

Poetry is for lovers
This is true
For lovers like me and you
And those who are not afraid to bare their soul
And spill with careful words
Their heart's content

For those who dream of nature scenes
Flower beds and wild green grasses
Moon-lit skies, quiet walks
And goodnight kisses

Poetry is for lovers
If it is not so
Then why do lovers cling
To poetry things?

Cheryl Griffith

RACISM THE UNIVERSAL NIGHTMARE

Madness, sadness
Hating, degrading
Dehumanizing
Humanity dying
Die, die
Fight, fight
My fellowmen
To what end?

Twisted believes
Wounds unhealed
Each one bleeds, each one feels
Fear, such fear
Tears, such tears
Restless catastrophe
Past ideologies affecting the present
Wasted lives past away in strive
And hope's dream night conceals

Red, yellow black, white
Straight hair, kinky hair, see here!
Colors, mere colors
Of inferiority and superiority
Violent ideologies
Mad philosophies
Distorted facts
White good, bad black

On and on fighting, hating, killing
Humanity dying, dying
Ebony and ivory
No sight to see
Each man's beauty and dignity
Each color unique
God's creation all
Who cares? !
Racism here
A universal nightmare!

Cheryl Griffith

Raining Thoughts

Thoughts drizzle from my brain
Like rain grand-charging the sun
seeking to introduce his presence
Offering promises
And I, lingering in the moment
wondering, what he had to offer

Will he wash away my pain
and bury my yesterdays in his out-pouring?
Or storm my mangled emotions
hurling out hurricanes
leaving me broken in his calm

Perhaps, he'll drizzle poetry
His breath warm and fragrant like the wind
whispering in my ear
caressing my mind with liquid fingers
Telling me to forget yesterday
See only today
And water it with change.

Cheryl Griffith

SEASON OF VIOLENCE

It's a festival of blood
A season of violence
Fear bubbles liked a boiling pot
Rising like steam
Above chattering heartbeats
Light crawls back to hide
From the shock of terror
Under the blanket of night
Whispers of prayers tickle the air
To spur our faith, restore our innocence
Or perhaps purge the blood-stained land
With hearts so penitent
Tomorrow will be different
Tomorrow will be different

Cheryl Griffith

Signs Of The Times

These are dark times brother
Shadows linger everywhere
Spirits parade and dance to the music of violence
Shaking to the rhythm of the gun
Barbarity and demoralization say come
Weeping and moaning everywhere
War is fun; you'll find no friend here

These are dark times sister
Night lingers and the stars bring no relief
The moon is red with blood-shed
And everywhere screams of terror
As each day brings more grief
But hope sister hope
And if you hope to find love
Remember, deception lives here
Do not shed tears of sorrows
You may find none who cares
Money is king and corruption Dean
And strange men wait to strangle your heart
And steal your dreams

These are dark times mother
You'll find no kindness here
The birds are silent
Our children grow rigid and restless
Painting on the canvas of the world; the image of their anger
While the wind blows oppression everywhere
It's raining sorrow, some dread tomorrow
Did light once shine here?
Advance civilization they say; age of technology
Skyscrapers, computers, paved savannahs
Concrete fields, orgies and dark metals building hearts of steel
But pray mother pray, soon, soon
Soon the dark will fade
Stand strong brother, stand strong sister soon, soon
Soon the dawn will break
And light will awake from his sleep
And shine once more upon this place
And though you grow weak, please, no longer weep
But pray and wait, wait
wait for the dawn of light to come and erase this night
Wait, wait for daylight

Cheryl Griffith

Silence

Silence! Hush!
Be still, listen
Don't you hear?
There's silence out there
Silent hatred, silent fear
A silent cry of despair
Silent hunger, silent shame
All this silence, don't you care?
Silent agony, silent pain
The silent whisper of a lover's name
Silent death, a silent plea
Silent words that have never been said

A silent hope, a silent pledge
Silent mourning, a silent grief
Silent anger rooted deep
A silent warning don't you see?
A silent laugh, silent greed
A silent vengeance, a silent dare
There's silence everywhere
All this silence don't you care?

Cheryl Griffith

Skin

I need to shed this skin
To rip this flimsy fabric
from my frail body
Which only conceals me

I need to pluck every grain of hair
Which seems to confuse and cause dispair
If this is what it takes for you to see me
I will peel this skin
like an orange that bleeds
When cut too deep
To emancipate self
From the accusation of a colour
That pre-paints destiny
Fate and status in this world

I will tear and rend this skin
Till nothing is left but me
And I stand naked
bruised and blood-dripping
Will you see me then?
Could you really see me?
Colored colorless, me
No different from you
I breathe the same air
Cry the same tears
And feel the same pain
I smile and laugh and bleed
like you, no different

My skin, just a cover
Like the various tints
and shades of fabrics that clothe our bodies
Yet you insist to alienate me
To segregate and discriminate me
Why hate me? Why stereotype me?
Because of a colour?
If we were to strip the rainbow of its colours
Could you imagine the beauty lost?
But the rainbow, a thing of beauty
Of mystery and wonder
A thing of color
Continues to spread itself across our skies
A testimony to us all

Cheryl Griffith

Speaking Out

This poem?
This poem strives to bring meaning
Straining beyond the agony of words
Stretching beyond the deep, dark abyss of time
Where emptiness leeks
And sorrow sucks your spirit dry
Draining your blood like a leech
Struggling to face life's task
Force to wear a mask
Clear my throat and move on
Coughing up courage mixed with hope
To go where faith demands
And walk this road not made with human hands

This poem has turned frail, tired eyes
On years of sweat and tears and kept her peace
Forever bearing a smile, that hides the pain that lies behind
Silently sobbing out her sorrows
Like clothes beating against stone till white
This poem has taken much, and will not be hushed
This poem will speak!
But at the edge of the heart wisdom is weak, are words enough?

This poem is not about metaphors, similes and such
This poem too deep!
This poem has spent nights in hell
Bears the scars of scourging fire and live to tell
Where demons shadow swallow your peace
Devouring your flesh, your sleep
And fear pours thick and yellow
Like pus from a septic sore
Obscuring all beauty
Yet forced to hold my head up high
And walk with dignity
A dignity that did not come easy
But came through strain and age
Much poverty, rejection and lamentation
Too much to put upon this page

I this poem say
I've paid my bills of pain and sorrows
And cashed my share of tear-filled tomorrows
Forever gathering my life like scattered leaves
Yes! I took all that life spurned
And earned a peace that many yearn
Many are dead, their dreams silenced
At least I have a heart to grieve

And why is it that human tenderness is usually late
Like long, lost mails
And when it comes at time so frail
The fact is, Humans are as complicated as the truth

This whole world is a market of doom
And I have had too many gloom
Seen too many setting suns and dark rough seas
It's time, this time the sun will rise for me!
Me, God's blessed, Clad in regal dignity had fallen
Broken bodied, a somewhat paralyzing deformity
Joy it seems is fused in misery
A cruel irony, something evil is always aiming at your smile

But I will stand again
I will run again
Like a star that brightens dark skies
I will shine again
I like a broken bird will fly again
And dance upon the walls of this world that tried to imprison me
For I am free!

Cheryl Griffith

Till Now

I remember love once
Came knocking at my door
In gentle, enamoured voice
Calling so cordially
Cajoling me, inviting me to embrace
I remember, the fire in his eyes
The hunger in his touch, the flames ascending within
The mysteries that were revealed
When lips touch lips and skin touch skin
Yes, I knew love once
I thought I did but I was wrong
I never knew love till now
I've never love till now

I remember the sacred song
Holy word of an ancient language that escaped my lips
And none can interpret it.
I remember the songs our spirit sang
The passion that kindle
When our bodies mingle
And soul and spirit entangled with love
I believed it was love when I said ‘I love you'
But I lied; I never knew love till now
I've never love till now
I never knew, my heart can beat so loudly
Laugh so loudly, sing so loudly, so sweetly
I never knew such melodies till now.

I long for the moment unencumbered
Rapture from this world
Just you and I, and nothing between us
No lines between us, no space between us,
No illusions, delusions or elements of pandemonium
Just love, just us
I long for your gentle kiss, your touch
I long to be in your arms my love
Where I'm alive and free
Trembling like a frightened child
In awe of your angelic pulchritude

And I burn
One thought, one touch from you
And I burn with a fire that purifies my soul
I melt in the grandeur of your presence
I lose myself and become one, with love
I never knew such beauty, such glory
Such symmetry of spirit and soul
I never knew love till now
I've never love till now

Cheryl Griffith

Time

Pregnant with hope
She ponders
Possibilities lodged in the womb of chance
Time's callused fingers
Reaches forth
And kills the child within

Cheryl Griffith

Touched

Who are you to stroll into my life
With such boldness and audacity
Claiming with authority
That I am yours and this is destiny?

How is it your words
Are able to move me beyond words
and touch without touching
The very consciousness that makes me woman?

Cheryl Griffith

Untitled

Polish me with your love my sweet
Cause my heart to exfoliate
the dead accumulation of the past
As love takes new meaning

Cheryl Griffith

Untitled 2

I have descended
Into the depths of heart and soul
To shake bones and nerves
To draw out imagery and emotion
And sharpen precision, to create poetry
Then, I met you and words fail me
I am left speechless

Cheryl Griffith

Why Grieve?

Silence stormed my noise-filled world
Blasting its hilarious existence asunder
Bringing its bubbling high pitch to dead silence
Like a dried-up leaf drained of life
Dropping to the earth in quiet surrender
How suddenly I stand here
Stranded on death's shore
Death with her deep, dark voice invite with lure
Eternal peace, rest to weary souls
And tired worn-out hearts
My life now a silent sleep
The hard, dusty earth my bed
The darkness a pillow where now I lay my head
Tears are left behind for love ones who cry
The loyalty of some who try to store
The rotting remains of a name
Till the glory fade and they forget your fame

Why Grieve?
Each in turn must take his leave
From this world we know
And step into the unknown
Take comfort in the times once had
The thoughts once shared, why be sad?
Life in its self is a shallow grave
My soul now alive with rapture
I've given up the mortal for immortality
Why grieve for me?
Rest, rest in the darkness
quietly, silently all must die
Too late then for the things you meant to say
Too late for counsel, too late to pray
Rest, rest now my tired soul
Once do weary and full of fear
Lie still, lie still

Cheryl Griffith