

Tarryn Booyesen

The piece:

This piece was written following the deaths of George Floyd and Sarah Hegazy. Both people who were too tired to keep fighting. The world did them wrong. This piece speaks to us taking a stand and making a difference alone, together through art, through petitions, through breathing.

I can't breathe

I write when it hurts. When my angered tears burn my skin. We take to the streets, we sign petitions. Your life matters they say, we condemn they say. Yet nothing changes and now here I am trying to make this pain sound poetic.

1992 - the year I was assigned my box
It's a girl! She will wear dresses and like boys
I can't breathe
She will cook and clean and be submissive
The tears. The tears. It burns my skin
I can't breathe
Knee to neck. it hurts. He couldn't breathe

They wouldn't let him breathe
They won't let us breathe
They won't let us breathe
They won't let us breathe because the revolution was born with our first breath
The revolution was born the moment we said no.
The moment we said not in my name. It was born.
The revolution is here. It has been here.

The governments condemn. Thank you, Mr President, for your condemnation but what life does that bring back which law does it rewrite?

Sarah Hegazy, her colors were too bright for this world. We failed her. She left us. She couldn't breathe.

So we breathe! We breathe for the ones gone before us. The ones who have paved and are still paving the way. We breathe for us. For future generations. We breathe.
In a world divided, we were never meant to live in boxes
How many more? How many more of us need to suffer?
Cry! Scream! Laugh. Breakdown if you need to! Whatever it takes for you rise.
Whatever you need to keep breathing

The revolution is now, the revolution is us
The revolution is here. The revolution has been here.

Do whatever it takes to fuel the fire, fuel the fight

Take a knee, march for your lives...
They will give us hashtags and petitions
We will rewrite the narrative, we will be the revolutionaries

For the revolution is Emma Gonzalez
The revolution is Vanessa Nakate
It is Alain Nteff, Yogesh Kumar, Greta Thunberg, Zulaikha Patel
The revolution is (insert your name here)
They may not be ready, but best believe the revolution will be televised!