

Mixtapes

BIG CITY FEELINGS



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POETRY
in VOICE

les VOIX de
la POÉSIE

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CECILY'S LINER NOTES

In “Big City Feelings,” I have curated a collection of poems that speak to the emotional tether that binds many of us to urban environments. In my own work, I often write about the complexities of locational relations – the privilege of travel, connection, and a sense of home intertwined with the harshness of city life, particularly through a lens of class, race and gender.

Cities are often defined by landmarks, major events and pervasive generalizations about the people who inhabit them. In his poem *Chicago*, Carl Sandburg writes, “They tell me you are wicked and I believe them,” encouraging contemplation about our perception of cities.

Moving from London to Vancouver pushed me to reflect on the personality of a city. London is centuries old and home to nine million people – its reputation is solidified. Vancouver, on the other hand, is an infant, born from colonial power, still being defined – or resisting definition. For this mixtape, I sought out writers exploring similar urban conundrums.

How we relate to cities is emotional. The smell in the air, the paving on the roads, the height of the buildings, the pace of the people, and the memories we have made there all evoke something different for each person. The poems I have chosen for this mixtape reflect that – how one’s identity or background influences how they relate to a city. For example, Jillian Christmas shares a story of surprise upon arriving in Whitehorse, while Lindsay Nixon recounts a

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moment of rage, rooted in trauma.

I hope you enjoy this journey through the crowds and chaos of metropolitan life and find, along the way, the inspiration to visit one of these places – or perhaps avoid them altogether.



THE POEMS

VERSO 3.1

by Dionne Brand

**ST JOHN'S BURNS DOWN
FOR THE UMPTEENTH TIME**

by James Langer

**SHOTS RANG OUT ON MY
STREET TODAY**

by Afua Cooper

COMMUNITY GARDEN

by Jen Sookfong Lee

LONDON

by Cicely Belle Blain

NORTHERN LIGHT

by Jillian Christmas

NIYA

by Lindsay Nixon

IDEAS OF HOME

by Lorna Goodison

MONDAY THAW

by Weyman Chan

MARCH ON WASHINGTON, 1993

by Jane Byers

A poetry mixtape edited by Cecily Belle Blain.

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