

Amnesty International

IMPRISONED WRITERS



DAILY READINGS: TOP AUTHORS READ FROM WORK THAT HIGHLIGHTS
HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES & RESTRICTIONS ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

Friday 17 August

LGBTQI+ State of Mind

Today's readings:

James Baldwin - *Go the Way Your Blood Beats* James Baldwin was an American novelist, social critic and essayist. His work explores the pressures of inequality of race, class and sexuality. Today's reading is an abridged excerpt from An Interview with James Baldwin by Richard Goldstein published in '*James Baldwin: The Last Interview and Other Conversations*'.

PJ Samuels – *Voices* PJ Samuels is a poet, educator, and LGBTI human rights activist and advocate. She is a Christian and the facilitator of '*Weather the Storm*', an LGBTI refugee peer support group she started in 2015. Originally from Jamaica, she is passionately vocal about human rights, mental wellness, stigmatisation and inequalities. Today's poem features in the collection *Sista! An Anthology of Writings by Same Gender Loving Women of African/Caribbean Descent with a UK connection* edited by Phyll Opoku-Gyimah, Rikki Beadle-Blair and John R Gordon.

Priyanka Meenakshi - *My Gender Is Not Neutral, My Gender Is Brown, And Hairy, And Lesbian* Priyanka Meenakshi is a queer brown person living in Bristol, England. Priyanka started making art at a young age to manage, process and share experiences of trauma and growth. Today's piece was published in *gal-dem* magazine in December 2017.

QM – *I Only Admire Girls* QM is a 20-year-old woman from Zamfara, Nigeria. Today's piece is included in the collection '*She Called Me Woman: Nigeria's Queer Women Speak*' edited by Azeenarh Mohammed, Chitra Nagarajan and Rafeeat Aliyu. Chitra was speaking about the collection at the Book Festival earlier today.

The readings for today were selected by your chair, Claire Heuchan, aka Sister Outrider.

Today's readers:

Thomas Enger is a Norwegian thriller and crime author, best known for his Henning Juul series. The latest instalment *Killed* is the finale of the series.

Ziyad Marar is an Iraqi born author, and the president of global publishing at SAGE. His most recent book, *Judged: The Value of being Misunderstood*, was published this year.

Fiona Sampson is an author, and trained violinist. Her poetry collection, *Rough Music* was nominated for the T.S Elliot Prize and the Forward Poetry Prize. She is at the Book Festival to talk about her latest work *In Search of Mary Shelley*.

Dr Eley Williams is an author and lecturer. Her collection of short stories, *Attrib. And other Stories*, was chosen by Ali Smith as one of the best debut works of fiction in 2017.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL CALL TO ACTION:

Alejandra has fought for trans rights for more than a decade in El Salvador. She was forced to flee to the U.S. after repeated attacks, sexual assaults and extortion by both criminal gangs and by the Salvadoran military. Alejandra is now stuck at the Cibola detention centre in New Mexico, waiting for an immigration judge's decision on her asylum claim. Tell ICE to release Alejandra, along with other detained transgender asylum seekers.

<https://www.amnesty.org.uk/actions/free-trans-rights-activist-Alejandra>