

The Street Poet.

By Jamie Shepherd. 18/08/2024.

Melbourne, a city that harbours refuge for the creative population - a haven for creative expression and subcultural movements. The streets are alive with diverse stories begging to be told, and people who live to tell them.



Jaidyn In Action.

Underneath a big tree next to the pond in Melbourne's beloved Carlton Gardens, sat Jaidyn Luke Attard – a writer, a poet – or, more specifically, a street poet. Unsurprisingly in hand, was a small notebook and a pen. “It’s like some kind of addiction, it just doesn’t stop.”, he says with a laugh, not looking up from what he was scribbling down.

As a multi-faceted writer and professional editor, it can’t stop. Jaidyn spends a lot of time wandering the streets of Melbourne, capturing images of the streets with his words and posting his work around the streets for the city visitors and inhabitants to read. There, comes the term street poet.

“Initially, I had no idea what a street poet was. I’m not even sure it existed, exactly. Maybe it did.”, he says. Inspired by the need to integrate with the real-world during lockdown, Jaidyn branched out from his typical fantasy writing and took to the streets for inspiration. “I sort of had a crisis at the age of 21 and I thought no, things need to change.”

“I thought I could just wander around, look at things, and be part of the world in some sort of way. Every time I wandered around, I would see something I wanted to write about, so I began writing little notes. Poetry. Sooner or later, it got the name street poetry somehow.”

Every writer has their own unique motives that inspire them to write, and for Jaidyn, his inspiration comes from a personal place. Having experienced what its like to feel like an outsider, and dealing with paranoia, his work reaches people on an emotional level. “I want other people to read what I write and connect with it as well, if they can.”.

I asked about what drives him personally, and where he pulls his inspiration from. He stops for a moment to think, pulling small blades of grass out of the ground beneath him. “My life – as an artist – often plays into my writing. It doesn’t really solve the issue, but it is very cathartic, and helps me deal with my day-to-day stresses. At the same time though, the stresses help me create the art. It goes both ways.”.

A pause.

“One thing I write a lot about is paranoia and what it feels like to be an outsider. Even though I have this group of amazing friends and artists around me, I feel like I can never fully connect with someone, so I need to get that into writing if I can.”.

In 2021, Jaidyn had started collaborating with other writers and began writing a book with two other people. At some point that year, the trio parted, and Jaidyn was left alone in the big city. “One person went in one direction, one moved overseas, and I’m... still here. I just felt this aftershock of well, that’s it? It can’t be over now.”.

Missing the art of collaboration, Jaidyn reached out to a couple of friends, and got some collaborations happening. As a result, the Degraives Circle formed – a group of Melbourne based writers who work on various written projects together.

“It’s become something much larger than just a little group of people. It’s like, almost a family now. You know, I love all of these people, and we have good times, we create some cool stuff – we’re working on zines at the moment, doing a third and fourth issue of our zine series, which is really cool.”

Publishing written works has brought Jaidyn a sense of community, and has allowed him to create meaningful connections with others, as well as the world around him. Being a resident of Melbourne and not having travelled too far off home soil, Jaidyn seeks out stories about this city – which can be quite suffocating.

“I can’t just stay here and only write about Melbourne, because I find myself these days trying to squeeze blood out of a rock.”

However, Jaidyn put the addiction to the city of Melbourne quite well in a poem published in his autofictional novel, “The Street Poet” –

“Melbourne is like an old lover that you keep coming back to –

or one you never leave.

She enraptures you,

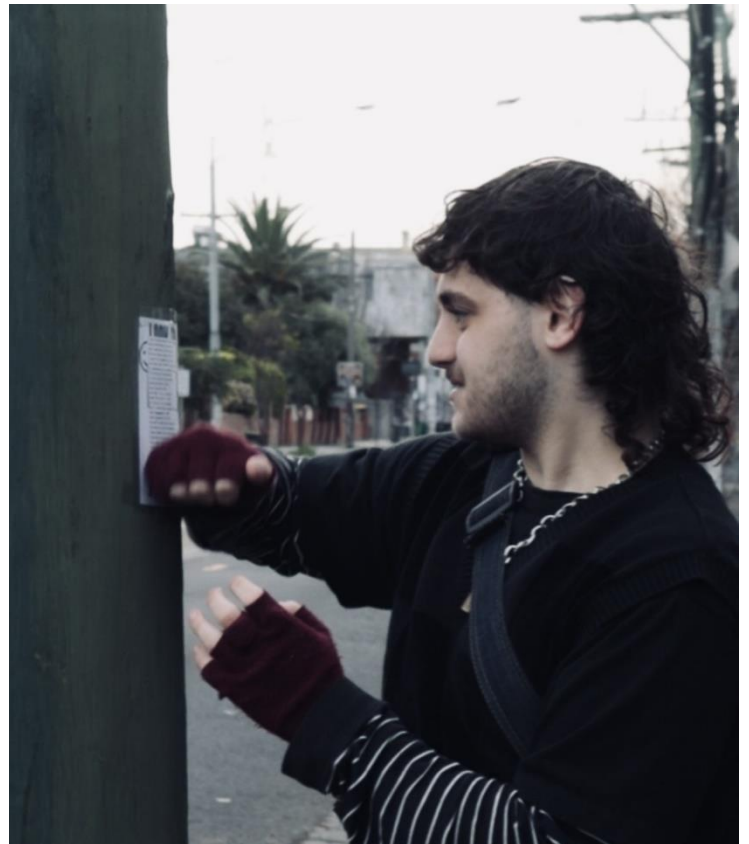
she satisfies you,

she berates and elates you,
and even when she
shuts you out
you love her all the same.”.

I’m sure a poem like this would speak to the hearts of many Melbourne locals, and through posting his work on the streets, he opens himself up to people contacting him about his work, and how it made them feel. I had to know if these kinds of connections with the public motivate him to continue writing.

“That, in a way, poses the question; do I write for myself, or am I writing for other people? And it’s a bit of both. I mean, I write for me, because it keeps me sane and it’s what I like to do. It’s cathartic. I don’t care all that much about being praised for my writing. For me, its more about connecting with people.”.

As an artist, the most important thing you can do for yourself is put yourself out there, and that is exactly what Jaidyn does.



“Most of us writers, we tend to hide our best works in the top drawer of our desks because we’re not sure that its up to scratch. Getting my work out there was what made me proud, even if I wasn’t one hundred percent proud of what I’d written. It is what ultimately got me to where I am today.”

You can find Jaidyn’s work on his website, <https://jaidynpoetry.com/>.

Or, scour the streets of Melbourne, and you’re bound to find something.