



Poets can articulate emotions in a way that many of us aren't able to fully express in words. They capture others through universal themes, communicating the state of the times that they live in. Blazing Non-Binary is one such poet, a fearless orator who gives a voice to the deepest of vulnerable sentiments. But at the core of this confident poet is a person named Kim.

# WICKED

## FINDING HER VOICE

With a lawyer for a father and a teacher for a mother, Kim Windvogel grew up in an environment filled with conversation that took note of everything. 'My upbringing was like being in a flowery field while suffering from hay fever. Sometimes growing up was difficult, many times hiding trauma behind laughter – something a lot of coloured people do. Yet so much fun, so much love, so much to be thankful for,' she says. Having surrounded herself with books and the musical stylings of performing artists such as Alanis Morissette, Cyndi Lauper and Tracy Chapman (to name a few), poetry felt like the natural next step for Kim. 'The more you see others be unapologetic, the more you realise you can do it too. You think to yourself: "I love how this person makes me feel. I want to make myself feel this way" and then you write, you sing, you express yourself in the most vulnerable and open

way that is suitable in that moment and you allow it to happen without judging or doubting your work. Once I realised that other people enjoyed reading my work, I started taking myself seriously,' she shares. It is at this point that Blazing Non-Binary came to the fore.

## FOR THE PEOPLE

With Blazing Non-Binary as a pseudonym, Kim continued to push poetry as a career and slowly but steadily began to progress. Along the way, she published a compilation of poems in her book *Resist: The Paradox of Love and Other Societal Disorders* and began working as a UN fellow. She also co-founded Femme Projects, an organisation focused on providing comprehensive feminist sexual education to the youth.

Kim is serving her purpose to be a voice for others, but it doesn't come without some challenges. 'Being a freelancer is not easy. You'll need a lot of support. Having

little money in a world and generation that constantly wants to go out for drinks and look good at social events is hard when you barely have money for the basics at home – because you are trying to build something so much bigger. You find yourself crying, doubting and wishing you had a 9-to-5. The thing to remember is that you have a plan. As long as you have the ability to improvise and the capacity to ride the waves, you should be fine,' she says.

A poet and educator, Kim is uncompromising as she shares her vulnerabilities – her social-media following is proof that her work touches people in more ways than one. And although she has chosen a career path that is consistently inconsistent, Kim wouldn't have it any other way. 'I get to share who I am and make people feel less alone. I get to work with the youth and talk about things otherwise shrouded in silence. I get to connect with fellow queer people. I get to live.' X

## FAST FACTS

**Full name:** Kim Lilian Windvogel

**Date of birth:** All you need to know is that I'm a Gemini. I can be your best and most complicated experience.

**Place of birth:**

Cape Town

**Favourite food:**

Anything I can put in my mouth and swallow.

**Favourite music:**

Music that makes me feel. Currently listening to Leon Bridges and Bishop Briggs a lot.

**Pet peeves:**

- Time wasters
- When my own anxiety returns (again!)
- When I get talked into going out with friends, knowing I should have stayed home and end up having a horrible time, as expected.

**Three things you**

**can't live without:**

Food, creativity and crying.

TEXT: GERALDINE AMOKO; PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY IMAGES

# WORDPLAY

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**BLAZING NON-BINARY IS A POET FUELLED BY THE EXPERIENCES SHE SHARES WITH OTHERS**