

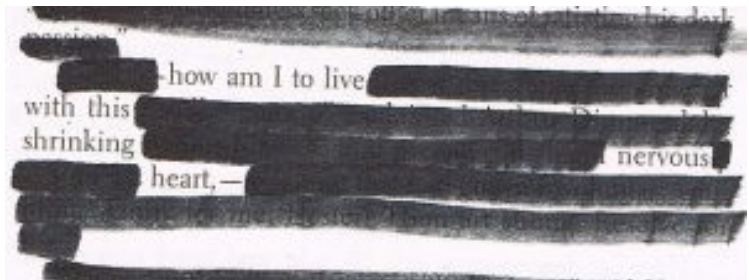
## Action Atelier proposal for the Higher Education Summit

### Transformative erasure: a poetry workshop

How can poetry impact society and inspire change? Is it possible to write a poem in around 60 minutes? This action atelier will answer both questions by proposing a hands-on and creative experience, which can potentially involve a wide variety of age groups.

#### What is it about?

The idea of this atelier is to start from words, to remove them from their context, and to make them into something different to inspire change and give voice to individual, as well as collective, acts of care. In our age of precarity and precariousness, in which the very habitability of our planet becomes uncertain, showing care by using the right words is essential, and poetry is the best place for language to display its transformative potential. However, not always is it easy to understand or write poetry: we feel like we lack the right vocabulary or the necessary skills. Erasure poetry is the answer to such doubts. This creative technique gives everyone the opportunity to engage in an original and artistic activity, while also prompting reflection on the importance of words and the way they can effect positive change. During the workshop, each participant will be provided with a range of journal articles, book excerpts, or short stories to choose from, all dealing with or related to climate change and the environment at large; after an introduction into the world of erasure poetry and of activist poetry, participants will be guided into the creation of their own poem, starting from the text of their choice. At the end of the session, everyone will be given the opportunity to share their poem and to reflect on how poetry can be used to create alternative visions of planetary resistance and habitability.



#### How will it be structured?

The first 30 minutes will be devoted to an introduction to the topic, to showing some examples of how poets can also be climate activists (through, for instance, the video performances of Marshallese poet Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner in *Rise* and *Dear Matafele Peinem*, available on YouTube), and to introducing the participants into the world of erasure poetry.

In the following hour the proper poetry workshop will take place.

#### References

Carol Rumens, "Blanked verse: the power of erasure poetry", *The Guardian*, 12 Nov 2021

Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner and Aka Niviàna, *Rise*, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QtT-hJBZIUy>

Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner, *Dear Matafele Peinem*, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IrfacrZOXf0>

Poets.org, *Erasure*, available at <https://poets.org/glossary/erasure>

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