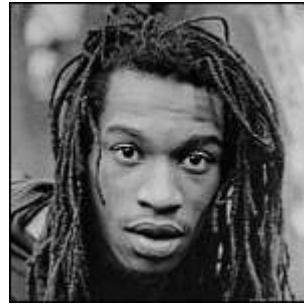


Benjamin Zephaniah



Benjamin Zephaniah is a poet, musician and writer. His poetry is influenced by reggae rhythms and by the Jamaican poems he heard in his childhood. He tours all around the world performing his poetry out loud.

He was born in Handsworth, Birmingham in 1958. He found school difficult because he was dyslexic and he left school at the age of 13, unable to read and write. He got into trouble with the police and he served a short prison sentence for burglary. He moved to London in 1979 and published his first collection of poems "Pen Rhythm" in 1980. He was poet in residence at the chambers of Michael Mansfield QC, and sat in on the bloody Sunday enquiry and other cases. This influenced his poetry collection - "Too Black, too strong". He has also published novels for teenagers - "Face" and "Refugee Boy"

Benjamin Zephaniah cares deeply about human rights and social justice. He is a pacifist and a convinced vegan. His most famous fan is Nelson Mandela, whom he met after he recorded a tribute song with The Wailers in 1979.

