# ANMWE

Haitian Creole – English Poetic Translation

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| **SI NOU KAPAB, DI MWEN**<br>**KI DOULÈ KI PI GRAN**<br>**PASE DOULÈ MANMAN** | TELL ME, TELL ME<br>WHAT PAIN IS GREATER<br>THAN A MOTHER'S SORROW |
| **KÈ MWEN AP DECHIRE**<br>**ZANTRAY MWEN AP RACHE**<br>**KILÈS K APE DI MWEN**<br>**POUKI YO TOUYE PITIT MWEN** | MY HEART IS TORN<br>MY SOUL IS ACHING<br>CAN YOU TELL ME WHY<br>WHY THEY KILLED MY CHILD |
| **EDE M KRIYE, EDE M RELE**<br>**DOULÈ YON MOUN SE DOULÈ TOUT MOUN**<br>**BAY KOU BLIYE, POTE MAK SONJE**<br>**YON JOU POU CHASÈ, YON JOU POU JIBIE** | HEAR ME CRY, HEAR MY SCREAM<br>WE ALL SHARE THIS PAIN<br>THE GIVER OF THE BLOW FORGETS, THE BEARER OF THE SCAR REMEMBERS*<br>A DAY FOR THE HUNTER, A DAY FOR THE PREY* |
| **MWEN SÈMANTE TWA FWA**<br>**SA P AP PASE KONSA**<br>**M AP KRIYE, M AP RELE**<br>**M AP FÈ LATÈ TRANBLE**<br>**POU JISTIS AK LAPÈ**<br>**KA BLAYI SOU LA TÈ** | I SWEAR, OH I SWEAR<br>I'LL TURN THIS CURSE AROUND<br>THROUGH MY SCREAMS, THROUGH MY TEARS<br>AND THROUGH MY DEFIANT STRENGTH<br>I'LL SEE THAT JUSTICE AND PEACE<br>SPREAD THROUGHOUT OUR WORLD |
| **DLO NAN JE MWEN SECHE**<br>**TOUT ZO NAN KÒ M KRAZE**<br>**LESPRI M FIN DERAYE**<br>**M APE RELE ANMWE** | I HAVE TEARS NO MORE<br>I KNOW STRENGTH NO MORE<br>I CAN THINK NO MORE<br>I CAN ONLY SPEAK MY PAIN |
| **LANNUIT KOU LAJOUNEN**<br>**MECHAN YO DECHENNEN**<br>**MALVEYAN PRAN LARI**<br>**INOSAN AP PERI** | NIGHT AND DAY<br>THE RUTHLESS ARE UNCHAINED<br>HAUNTING OUR LIVES<br>SNATCHING OUR YOUTH |
| **ANMWE, SEKOU SOUPLE**<br>**LANMOU SOU LA GRABA**<br>**LE MOND'NAN TÈT ANBA** | HELP, HELP, OH PLEASE HELP<br>LOVE IS HELD HOSTAGE<br>IN A WORLD OF VIOLENCE |
| **MEN TOUT RÈL GEN SEKOU**<br>**N A JWENN LA VI YON JOU**<br>**LÈ SA TÈ-A VA BÈL**<br>**BÈL TANKOU LAKANSIÈL** | WE MUST NOT DESPAIR<br>FOR WE'LL KNOW LIFE AGAIN<br>IN A NEW DAY FULL OF HOPE<br>FILLED WITH OUR CHILDREN |
| *-Gabriel T. Guillaume*<br>*January 2005* | **Haitian proverbs* |

The Meaning of ANMWE

A cry of pain, a cry of desolation,
A denunciation of hatred, a call for revenge,
A wake-up call, a call of hope.

The Mother, the powerful womb of the human experience, beseeches mankind to respect life.
She who gives birth in pain knows the price of life.
She who gives life hates the one who robs it.
She who bears love carries in her all of the world's ability for change, beauty, justice and peace.

*-Gabriel T. Guillaume*

Program Notes

The word "Anmwe" is a very powerful exclamation in the Creole language. It is hard to find an exact word in English to translate it effectively. To cry "Anmwe" is to convey pain, emotional torment and heartache on the deepest level. The piece was inspired by a gut-wrenching documentary which included a mother's tear-jerking reaction to the sudden loss of her three sons, blatantly killed during the ongoing conflict between the university students of Port-au-Prince and the government of Haiti at the time [2005]. The mother, having lost her sanity, spoke of her grief, mentioning how she wished they had also killed her so that she would not have to endure that excruciating pain. The text of *Anmwe* is written in the point of view of a mother who has lost everything.

*-Sydney Guillaume*