

THE STRENGTH OF DIVERSITY

GROWING UP ACROSS BORDERS
PHOTOVOICE PROJECT



OCTOBER 2025

T H E S T R E N G T H O F D I V E R S I T Y

G R O W I N G U P A C R O S S B O R D E R S P H O T O V O I C E P R O J E C T

Photographs by Abbas,
Dino, Karim, Laundry,
Nemo & Prosper

Produced by Prof Jane Freedman & Dr Isabel Morrell

With special thanks to Velos Youth

Financed by the ERC
ERC-GRABS Advanced Grant No 101141171



This booklet was created through a series of photography workshops held in Athens in October 2025, bringing together a group of young people to look more closely at their experiences of the world around them. The group members included: Abbas, Dino, Karim, Laundry, Nemo & Prosper

The group initially chose *nature* as a starting point for their exploration. As the workshops progressed, however, their photographs began to reveal something different. In response to this shift, the group chose a new title that better reflected the images they created: *The Strength in Diversity*.

BEHIND EVERY PICTURE IS A STORY



‘BEHIND EVERY PICTURE IS A STORY’

By Prosper

When we see the statues, we can imagine a story or a martyr or a great man who did something for his country



‘LIFE IS NOT EASY’

By Prosper

You need to be patient in life. A journey is never straight. You always find things blocking your way and you have to get past them.



‘STAY ALIVE’

By Dino

The water and the fountains, birds drinking the water. This makes me think of life. And the trees around the fountain are rooted in the ground like people. Be at peace with yourself.

EMBELLISHMENT



‘NATURE’S BEAUTY’

by Karim

I took this picture because I was fascinated by the beauty and the pink colour it carries. Immediately when I saw this little flower, I thought about butterflies and it's scent for perfume.



'MY MOTHER'S FLOWERS'

By Abbas

These flowers remind me of my home and the flowers my mother always had on the table. They keep her memory alive for me. I haven't seen her for ten years.



'SMILE'

By Nemo

خیلی از ما ها لبخند زدن واقعی را فراموش کردیم از بس که درگیر چیز های بزرگ و مادی و بیرونی شدیم ، بعضی وقت ها به خودت فرصت استراحت بده و با چشم دل و با عشق به همه چیز نگاه بنداز ، وقتی شادی رو درون خودت پیدا کنی و آن را با بقیه به اشتراک بزاری ، حتی طبیعت و زمین هم بهت لبخند میزند ، یک لبخند کوچک ارزشی ندارد اما اگر واقعی باشد هم زندگی تو تغییر خواهد کرد هم زندگی اطرافیانت را میتوانی تغییر بدی ، لطفاً با عشق و لبخند زندگی کن و به دنبال رویاهایت برو ، چیزی که مال تو باشه ، اون چیز بیشتر از خودت عاشق رسیدن به تو هست

Many of us have forgotten how to truly smile, because we've become so caught up in big, material, and external things. Sometimes you need to give yourself a moment to rest, and look at everything with the eyes of the heart and with love.

When you find joy within yourself and share it with others, even nature and the earth will smile back at you. A small smile may seem insignificant, but if it's genuine, it can change your life — and even the lives of those around you. Please live with love and a real smile, and follow your dreams. Whatever is meant for you is already on its way, and it is even more eager to reach you than you are to reach it.



‘REFUGE’

By Nemo

این عکس به معنی ، بعضی از مهاجر های جوان هست که استعداد و توانایی شان نادیده گرفته میشن یا مکان و فرصت برایشان داده نمی‌شوند تا توانایی های خودشان را شکوفا کنند ، مثل همین درخت نخل ، اگر فرصت و رسیدگی بشود همیشه ازش خرما برداشت کرد و از خرما هاش استفاده کرد ، البته اول باید خود آن جوان مهاجر این فرصت برای خود فراهم کند و کشف کند که کجا و در چی مکانی هست .

This picture represents how some young immigrants have their talents and abilities overlooked, or are simply not given the space and opportunities they need to grow. They are like this palm tree — if it is given care and the right conditions, it will bear dates, and those dates will be useful.

But first, the young immigrant must recognize their own potential, find the right environment, and create that opportunity for themselves.

LESSONS FROM THE STREET



‘VIVRE ENSEMBLE’

By Prosper

Les pigeons nous montrent comment vivre ensemble. Noir, blanc, différents pères et mères, mais ils vivent tous ensemble et mangent ensemble.



'KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE'

By Nemo

We can travel around the world through books. Building knowledge and experience to understand the world. With experience, learning and knowledge you can make your own world.



'TRUST AND CARING'

By Nemo

This makes me think of someone who cared about me and supported me so much.

'HOPE AND PATIENCE'

By Nemo

Waiting for the plant to grow shows patience and hope for the future. The butterflies make me think of freedom. If you want to enjoy your life be a child and play.



'MAKE IT BLOOM'

By Nemo

We all need help. Asking for help is not a weakness. With small help everything and everyone can grow. Imagine you are the flower and spread love.





'MARKET'

By Dino

You need to search for what you want to do in your life, like these people searching in the market for what is good.

LIGHT AND DARK



‘OUVERT ET LE CIEL OR INCOMPRIS’

By Laundry
Nobody can understand the
picture. Nobody can explain the
sky

OUVERT EST LE CIEL

By Laundry

Ouvert est le ciel
Dense est son porté
Multiples sont ses couleurs
Classe sont ses nuages
Mais unique il est.

Nous avons tous tendance à penser très fort
A des personnes qui sont loin
Mais hélas la distance un petit grand facteur qu'on a
tendance à minimiser
Mais au fond c'est comme un gouffre

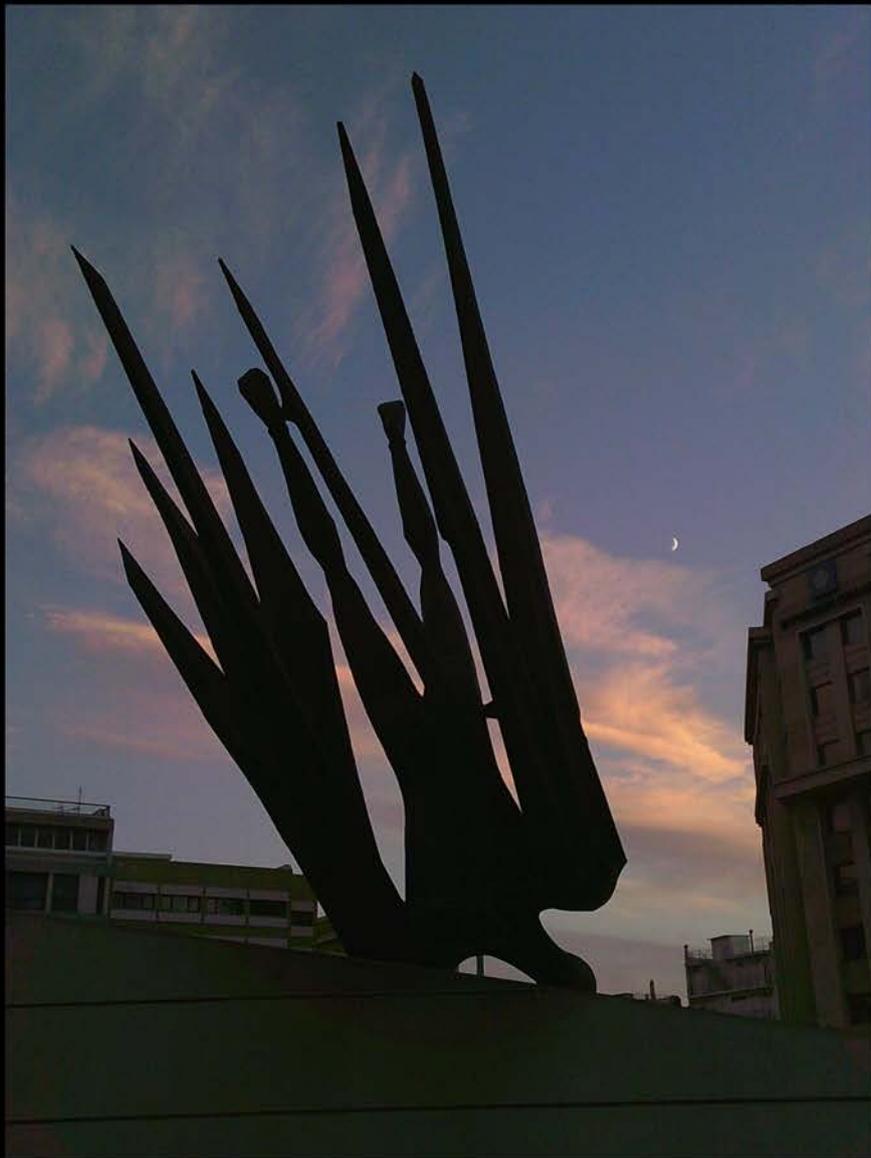
La seule chose à faire à cet instant
Lever la tête en direction de ce vaste étendu
Comme un dessin appelé « Ciel Pour Tous »



'A SMALL LIGHT IN THE DARK'

By Laundry

The picture shows darkness but inside there is light. You can see certain things trying to shine. The small light is me. I like being a light in the dark.



'EVERY SUNSET HAS A SUNRISE'

By Nemo

Everyone has to fall before they
get up again.



'FALLEN ANGEL'

By Nemo

Sometimes, if you make the wrong decision, an angel becomes a devil. Falling doesn't equal failure. You need to fall to grow.

STYLE AND LEGENDS



'MY HAIR, MY IDENTITY'

By Karim

The first photo with my head represents an Afro hair style that I personally carry. It's my identity, and I will never change that just because some people have stereotypes in their minds.



'SELF-PORTRAIT WITH FRIENDS'

By Dino

The reflection in the mirror shows so many things, so many layers. It reflects kindness and friendship.



'A SELF-PORTRAIT'

By Nemo

I want to title this self-portrait «Legends Never Die» because of all the negative things I have gone through but I have survived. I'm trying to make a better life and a better world.



<https://erc-grabs.univ-paris8.fr/>