

AKWAEKE EMEZI

“A once-in-a-generation voice.” —Vulture

Akwaeke Emezi (they/them) is a multidisciplinary artist and writer whose work—rooted in Black spirit, embodiment, legacy, and memory—spans multiple genres, experiences, and geographies. Since electrifying the literary world with their debut novel *Freshwater* in 2018, Akwaeke has garnered overwhelming critical acclaim and instant *New York Times* bestseller status with a rapidly growing body of work that includes two adult literary novels, two YA novels, a memoir, a romance, two poetry collections and counting.

Selected as a “5 Under 35” honoree by the National Book Foundation, featured in a *TIME* Magazine cover story as a Next Generation Leader, and photographed by Annie Liebovitz for a *Vogue* profile, Akwaeke has also been named one of “The New Hollywood Guard: Writers” by *Vanity Fair*. Their memoir *Dear Senthuran* was awarded the 2022 Stonewall Book Award for Nonfiction. Their romance debut, *You Made a Fool of Death with Your Beauty*, was published in 2022, with the screen rights selling to Amazon Studios in a seven-figure deal, for which Akwaeke will serve as executive producer.

Akwaeke is also the author of the *New York Times* bestseller *The Death of Vivek Oji*, which was a finalist for the Dylan Thomas Prize, the Los Angeles Times Book Prize, the PEN/Jean Stein Award and the Dublin Literary Award; *Pet*, a finalist for the National Book Award for Young People’s Literature, a Walter Honor Book and a Stonewall Honor Book; *Content Warning: Everything*, their debut poetry collection, and *Bitter*, their second young adult novel. Their debut autobiographical novel *Freshwater* was named a *New York Times* Notable Book, shortlisted for the PEN/Hemingway Award, the New York Public Library Young Lions Fiction Award, the Lambda Literary Award, the Center for Fiction’s First Novel Prize, and is in early development as a TV series at FX, with Akwaeke writing and executive producing with Tamara P. Carter.

Akwaeke was awarded a Global Arts Fund grant in 2017 for their video art, which premiered in 2018 at Gavin Brown’s enterprise in Harlem. They also received a 2017 Sozopol Fellowship for Creative Nonfiction and their short story “Who Is Like God” won the 2017 Commonwealth Short Story Prize for Africa. Their writing has been published by *T Magazine*, *Dazed Magazine*, *The Cut*, *Buzzfeed*, *Granta Online*, *Vogue.com*, and *Commonwealth Writers*, among others. Their most recent book, *Little Rot*, was released in 2024. The *New York Times* says of *Little Rot*: “a masterwork...mesmerizing...We come away troubled, unsettled — and in some subtle way changed.”