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**Department of English and Literature**  
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### EDITOR'S NOTE

Welcome back to *Benin Journal of Literary Studies (BJLS)*! The editorial team is pleased to present volume 2 of its journal, featuring another set of scholarly voices commenting on literature, life, and matters of the moment. A pertinent matter of the moment, foregrounded by the corona viruses and their continued onslaught of death and disease, is simply humankind's determination to survive. This determination takes numerous undercover dimensions in the present volume.

Clement Odia and Peter Aihevba open the discussion with a topical article on the contemplations of five recent Nigerian poets in the anthology, *World on the Brinks: An Anthology of Covid-19 Pandemic*. Odia and Aihevba analyse the poets' thoughts on the pandemic in terms of both its strength and its defeat: the apparent invincibility of Covid-19, the frailty of human life in the face of attack, and the ultimate victory of humankind as the pandemic compels human unity and love, the two forces which guarantee the pandemic's overthrow. The issue of sickness and survival replays in Lilian Onyeiwu's critique of madness in Okey Ndibe's *Arrows of Rain*. Onyeiwu concentrates on the split identity of the protagonist, Ogugua (Bukuru). She shows how his silence as well as his speech, which are actually manifestations of trauma and self-preservation, contribute to personal and social constructs of "madness." Samson Eguavoen and Psalms Chinaka highlight the lingering disease of injustice in Nigeria. Focusing on the poetry of Nnimmo Bassey, the researchers point to an interesting therapy which Bassey advocates: Begin resistance at the taproot, by accessing the people's collective memory, and proceed from there to mobilization and collective action. The disease preoccupying Edwin Onwuka and Kemi Kehinde is dysfunction in the family. Onwuka and Kehinde analyse the disruptive nature of religiosity on family life in Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*. They evaluate the households of major characters, comparing the lethal effects of religiosity with the wholesomeness of tolerance and respect for traditional mores such as the Igbo *Omenani*.

Edafe Mukoro approaches life from a different angle. In a study on love themes in two of Tony Afejuku's poetry collections, *A Garden of Moods* and *An Orchard of Wishes*, Mukoro reviews with tact the private experiences of the persona and the poet, exploring their depiction of love and their responses to intimacy, passion, frustration and disenchantment. Lilian Onyeiwu, in a second essay, keeps gender affairs alive in a celebration of womanhood in Adimora-Ezeigbo's *The Last of the Strong Ones* and

Adichie's *Half of a Yellow Sun*. In conclusion, Eruaga's creative piece, "Life is a Loan," reminds us of one final matter of the moment. Eruaga's poem advises us to make our lives matter to others for good. There could be some wisdom in that. Whether in a pandemic, or in rebellion, or in love, or in a spirit of celebration, mattering for good is probably what matters most.

*Sophia Akhuemokhan*