HARTWORKS

Spring 2007 • $5

SPECIAL SECTION: REFLECTIONS ON THE HOLOCAUST

The Charles Hart Middle School Literary Magazine
The hArtworks Editorial Board

Writers-in-Residence: Dwayne Betts, Omekongo Dibinga, Sage Morgan-Hubbard, James Saunders, Nancy Schwalb, Venus Thrash, and Jamila Wade

The Literary Magazine Club: Luqman Abdullah, Maryum Abdullah, Shannon Allen, India Bell, Terry Bennett, Antoinette Better, Stelita Better, Danielle Blake, Denisha Bolden, Ashley Boston, Antonio Bower, Natia Boyd, A. Montel Brooks, Steven Brown Jr., Tomika Brown, Jamal Buggs, Jamal Clark, Kiera Coleman, Reginald Conway, Ashley Cooper, Dominique Courtney, Nefertearia Crawley, Martanaze Dew, Cherish Gaines, Dai’Juna Gales, Bruce Gibson, Andrea Hermans, Shamia House, Tempest Jackson, Markus Johnson, Sha’uki Johnson, Yasmin Jones, Damon Kee, Nichell Kee, Symone Kennedy, Shawntay Kent, Jalencia King, Debra Lewis, Annice Ludd, Marvin McDowell, Shambriel Metts, Kiana Murphy, Jasmine Murray, Ja’Quan Newsome, Ashanti Paylor, Coletta Paylor, Keyosha Richardson, Marché Shields, Bynonka Simpkins, Monae Smith, Beatrice Smoot, Jessica Smoot, Ashley Stevenson, Danielle Stover, Wendie Thomas, Tierra Thornton, James Tindle, Tionna Wade, Devonté Walker, Jamie Warren, Brittany Watkins, Jamal Whittington, Darien Wilkins, Deshaun Williams, Jamal Williams, Renita Williams, Franzel Willoby, Sequan Wilson, Beverly Wright, Taniek Young

Front cover: Dimitrius Winters at the Tile Wall in the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum
Welcome to hArtworks, the nation’s only inner-city public middle school literary magazine, written and edited by the students of Charles Hart Middle School. hArtworks is published through a collaborative effort between the school and the D.C. Creative Writing Workshop, an independent non-profit working to create a literary renaissance in Southeast Washington. Now in its sixth year, hArtworks gives our young writers the opportunity to exercise their creative energies, speak their minds, and be heard by an audience throughout the city. The 2006 edition of Poet’s Market recognizes hArtworks as “an outstanding example of what a literary journal can be (for anyone of any age).”

This issue features our students’ reflections on the Holocaust, culminating our study of that period, including two visits to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum and a talk with a Holocaust survivor.

This year we welcome four new writers, Dwayne Betts, Omekongo Dibinga, Sage Morgan-Hubbard, and Venus Thrash, who join Nancy Schwalb and Jamila Wade as senior writers-in-residence. We also celebrate the return of James Saunders, a 16 year old junior at Ballou Senior High, for his second year as junior writer-in-residence. And the 2006-07 school year marks the start of our college internship program, bringing us the capable and committed service of Meilani Clay, Maricia Herron, and Katie Hinden.


Special thanks for the hard work and dedication of the D.C. Creative Writing Workshop Board of Directors: Mary Ann Brownlow, Dr. Susan Gerson, Bernie Horn, Kathleen Huston, Michael Joy, Joan Kennan, Bill Newlin, Raina Rose Tagle, Nancy Schwalb, Kirsten Tollefson, and Jamila Wade.

We would also like to thank the following administrators, teachers, and staff who are our partners in this endeavor: Principal Willie Bennett; Assistant Principals Ms. Kimberly Douglas and Mr. Shawn Pelote; Ms. Katherine Bucholtz, Ms. Gloria Fergusson, Ms. Carolyn Jackson, Mr. Malvaux, Ms. Terrie Spann-Tchama, Ms. Eleanor Seale, Ms. Pamela McKinney, Ms. Ann Brogioli, and Ms. Maevern Williams.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Luqman Abdullah</td>
<td>What Dreams Are Made of</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>His Mom Would Tell Him</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryum Abdullah</td>
<td>The Journey of My Dreams</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shannon Allen</td>
<td>My Life</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antonio Alston</td>
<td>My Life</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marquell Bethea</td>
<td>New Year's Eve</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antoinette Better</td>
<td>Riff About My Father</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Today's News</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mistakes</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stelita Better</td>
<td>My Life</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danielle Blake</td>
<td>In the Midst of Life</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tinkerbell</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Inner Me</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My Dream</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You've Been There</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denisha Bolden</td>
<td>To be found</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natia Boyd</td>
<td>I Wish</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaron Montel Brooks</td>
<td>My Dream</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colorful</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My Ode to the Toilet</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eye of the Tiger</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jada Brooks</td>
<td>I Am</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antonio Brown</td>
<td>Who I Want to Be Like</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Brown</td>
<td>In Ten Years</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamal Buggs</td>
<td>Many Years</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eyes you don't have</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almus Bush</td>
<td>Eternal thinking</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>My Life</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiera Butler</td>
<td>Suffocating</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A Dream</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curtis Canty</td>
<td>I Am</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence Carter</td>
<td>Poetry is</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wisdom</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dearah Chappell</td>
<td>Smiling</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamal Clark</td>
<td>My Letter to a Relative in Jail</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ars Poetica #1</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reginald Conway
  *Burning Souls* ................................. 10
  *A Poet* ............................................ 34
  *My World* ......................................... 35
  *The Designed Dream* .......................... 36
Jamal Conyers *A Dream* .......................... 16
Dominique Courtney *I Show Love By* .......... 51
Alishia Davis *Living with Anger* ............ 49
Markiya Davis *Anger* ............................ 30
Lance Favors *Show love* ........................ 60
Sean Favors *Dragging* ............................ 24
Anastasia Fleming
  *Slave* ............................................... 52
  *My Thinking AKA Pain* ........................ 52
Jaquan Footman *Summertime* .................. 60
Sherita Grady *I Am* .............................. 48
Martha Hardman *Untitled* ...................... 61
Andrea Hermans *Newborn Child* ............ 27
Jasper Hicks
  *Norfolk, VA* ...................................... 50
  *Sleep* ............................................. 58
Pauline Holsinger *Go Through* ............... 55
Shamia House
  *The Peace Maker* ............................... 12
  *The Hunger Mob* ............................... 12
Isaiah Jackson *Untitled* ....................... 60
Quanika Jackson *Trying to Arrive on the New Year '07* .... 29
Richard Jackson *My day in North Carolina* 63
Trevon Jackson
  *Today's News* ................................. 49
  *Football* ......................................... 49
  *Ars Poetica #100: Congress Park* ............ 50
Earl James *Dreams are dreams for a reason* ... 44
Brittany Johnson *Wake up* .................... 59
Dominique Johnson *Kaleidoscope* .......... 43
Marcus Johnson *Girls* .......................... 58
Shaiiski Johnson
  *Momento* ......................................... 13
  *Kaleidoscope* ................................... 25
  *New Year* ........................................ 27
Delvonte Jones
  *Dear Dad* ........................................ 50
  *I Want Our Neighborhood to Be Built Up Better* ... 51
  *Football* ......................................... 52
Yasmin Jones
  *Empty Souls* .................................... 14
  *Everyday Life* .................................. 17
  *Anger* ............................................. 19
  *Homeland* ...................................... 19
Damon Kee

Beware ... 19
My World 20
From One to Another 20
Gone ....... 21

Nichell Kee

Horrors... 11
The stillness 40
The Window 41
When I sleep 42

Manaiza Kelley

Who Am I? 57

Damian Lee

Show Love 56

Shantice Matthews

My Life Today 28

Marvin McDowell

Joyful 29

Jannett McKoy

The Beautiful Woman 57
Dreaming 59

Kiana Murphy

Walking into a Nightmare 9
A Dream. 13
I Was Not There 15
Portia Spreewell 18

Jasmine Murray

My Darkness 14
Never Shall I Forget 16
My Philosophy 17

Terrance Nails

Little Girl and the Squirrel 54

Mark Neal

New Creations 24

Colletta Paylor

An Incomplete List of People I Wish Were Alive 54

Kiarra Payton

What Is Love Without a Dream 44
Latia Pimble

My Lovely Dream 44
Quintin Pimble

My life is like 62

Keona Powell

Just Beautiful 46

Marquette Price

The Struggle 46

Eric Quarles

A Special Woman 56
My Pain 59
Who I Am 63

Keyosha Richardson

Fiery 30

Myah Robertson

Memory 12

Brittney Savoy

unknown 34
I come and stand 45

Keishawna Simms

All I Can Do Is Write About It 43

Bnyonka Simpkins

Forced to March 11
Anacostia River 40
My Gaze 41

Demarco Singleton

Untitled 62
Monae Smith

Hangin' Out Wit' Friends ................................................................. 47
You Figure it Out ........................................................................... 54
Monae's Day .................................................................................. 61
Pleading Triumph ................................................................. 62

Beatrice Smoot

On Park Street ................................................................................. 21
Desdemona Scott .............................................................................. 22

Jessica Smoot Rashida McDonald ......................................................... 22

Antonio Spencer

I'm Burning into the New Year ......................................................... 26
The Light of Nature ......................................................................... 28

Ashley Stevenson

Remember ....................................................................................... 11
Philosophy ....................................................................................... 43
This is how I show love, I show love by ........................................ 37
Danielle Stover Sadness ................................................................. 46

Tierra Thornton What They Mean ................................................... 38
DeJon Tucker Suffering in Silence ................................................ 41

Tionna Wade

Listen! ........ ................................................................................... 10
Life Is a Journey .............................................................................. 35

Vincent Walker In my mind ............................................................. 28

Jamie Warren Soul ............................................................................. 33

Donna Washington

A Poem for Myself ........................................................................... 50
What Should Be on the News ......................................................... 51

Theodore Washington Dear Father ................................................ 46

Brittany Watkins

She Runs and Hides .......................................................................... 42
The Window ....................................................................................... 45

Larry West Questions for God ........................................................ 47

Kanine Whitaker The Forest ............................................................. 42

Thomas Whitney

My Gaze on the World .................................................................... 25
I See ...... ......................................................................................... 26

Darien Wilkins My Emotions .......................................................... 31

Amber Williams A More Grown Life ............................................. 53

Nicole Williams I Am Your Sun ....................................................... 47

Renita Williams

Writing Poetry .................................................................................... 18
My Place. .......................................................................................... 22
Trustworthy ....................................................................................... 23

S quantitative Wilson Lost Souls ................................................... 10

Dimitrius Winters New Year ............................................................ 27

Joseph Woodard An Incomplete List of People I Wish Were My Teacher 53

Beverly Wright Colors ..................................................................... 29

Emmanuel Youman Rap It Up .......................................................... 38
On the bus to the Holocaust Museum, foreground Mark Neal

Ja’Quan Newsome at the Tile Wall

Sequan Wilson
Walking into a Nightmare

Hate. Disgust. Grief and shame.
These are the feelings—of me.
As I enter into a sudden silence. Darkness.
Of a memory that belongs to more than six million.

I live the life of others for only a few hours.
But it feels as if I am the life.
Walking for my freedom through a couple of miles.

The opening flames over innocent souls
bring tears to my eyes, that seem to flow
onto burned, lifeless bodies
buried beneath my feet.

As I walk through other peoples’ lives
I seem to hear them scream for help.
Survival. Their lives.

But I have a fear of waking up into this dream.
Of being treated this way, told to do this or that.
Knowing when I’m going to die.
Seeing fear before my own eyes.

This is all a dream, flickering within my mind.
But I choose to never again treat people as if they were a sin.

Kiana Murphy

In the Midst of Life

In the midst of life
they were burned to their souls
they went through hell and deceit
as their lives were taken away
The weeping of the people and the innocent children.
As the nightfall arose,
they were just minding their business,
when the Nazis wanted to be cruel
because of who people are.
It was horrifying, the voices of people
and the innocent children
who lost their lives because of identity.
And when they came, their suitcases
were taken away from them.
They will be missed by the weeping
eyes of their loved ones.

Danielle Blake
Burning Souls

Never shall this nightmare live again.
Childhood memories being burned on train tracks
long gone.
The flames burn with horror
as Nazis laugh with sinister voices.
Never again shall a bystander stand
with grief and shame.
We will not walk
down the path of fear.
Weary bodies being worked to death,
golden stars being stitched on
hard crusted jackets,
the dark buds cry for the hungry bodies,
numbers of people being killed everyday,
the shadows of souls floating in the sky.
Never shall this happen again.

Reginald Conway

Listen!

Burning souls
and never forgotten memories
follow me in my shadows
unmarked graves and wounded soldiers
dirty, hungry and filled with the worst sickness
Listen!
Listen!
Our history is before us
so wicked and full of fear
terror is so bad the sun cries tears
their childhoods are full of darkness,
grief and shame
so much hard, departed pain
unhappy, broken windows and broken glass
Thank you God
Thank you God
Here’s the golden star
we’re free
we’re free
we’re free at last.

Tionna Wade

Lost Souls

The ruler that brought us grief and shame
couldn’t take away the long-gone pain.
Jews’ grief didn’t end, for them hope is lost.
The heartless ruler would truly pay the cost.
He presented the Jews their unmarked graves.
Nazis treated them like monsters enslaved.
“The Jews are evil!” the Germans were told,
they just do not know about the Jews’ lost souls.

Sequan Wilson
Forced to March

I don’t belong here
in these empty rooms. Listen!
My eyes and hands are ashes.
I believe that all children should
know the truth. We are forced to march
with millions of soldiers, and
with barbed wire on our walls.
I hear voices, wounds I see on
different types of bodies.
I don’t belong here
in these empty rooms.

Bnyonka Simpkins

Horrors

The burning souls have risen from the shoes.
Unmarked graves filled
with rotting bodies
Nazi soldiers standing on them
laughing in the blinding darkness
The strangeness of the wounded family’s
spirit is in the air.
They won’t rest until they get revenge.
The filth of the bodies smell is now
lingering in the air. A witness, a young girl
frightened by the sight of her mother
being shot in the head.
The horrors of the bottomless pit
of a rectangular box of nothingness
until it is suddenly filled with all kinds of people.

Nichell Kee

Remember

Jews were put into ghettos
The suitcases were thrown on the train tracks
The Jews heard the Nazis footsteps
Jews are remembered
Many Jews survived
Never again will this happen

Ashley Stevenson
The Peace Maker

As I wished for a better place,
it never came true.
Golden gates, crystal rivers,
ponds, pools, and seas
horses and ponies galloping around
as if they were busses or trains
a glorious sky to look up upon
Hunting down flowers in a fresh garden
with posies, daisies, tulips, daffodils,
dandelions, and sunflowers.
Peace, no guns.
Staying alive, no knives.
No killing, no prisons.
Longest labors, shorter death.
Heroic mist coming to make my dreams come true—
Suddenly it's time to awake,
and as you walk outside, it's just how you dreamed of it.

Shamia House

Memory

Never shall I forget
I shouldn't be here
The Jews and their pain
Death, sickness
Yesterday's soldiers, today's ashes
Hidden in this grey smoke
with scars and wounds of fear
Innocent bystanders
become millions and millions
of unheard voices

Myah Robertson

The Hunger Mob

As we want more, they want less.
As we take, they give.
As we fight, they surrender.
They always take our pride and dignity.
And we take back what's left of us.
The Hunger Mob wears only either
orange, yellow, tan or white.
The Hunger Mob protects what they got.
The Hunger Mob has dogs, but only for trespassers.
The Hunger Mob eats what they feel.

Shamia House
A Dream

I look through my glasses,
seeing a wannabe world.
Instead of bursting into an eternal mist
it will be torn into a glorious aftermath.

I abandon the reality of the wrong things in the world—
the guns, the fighting,
the racism upon the atmosphere
I see getting along, and peace around the world
through the lenses of the made-up world.

The heroic soldiers are under a roof of love and care
rather than bombs coming from elsewhere.
Lives will last for an eternity, not for two seconds
upon the earth's layer.

But when I take the glasses off
it will turn back to reality,
under many tragedies
Thinking that violence is the world's sanctuary.

Kiana Murphy

Momento

Listen, can you hear the broken glass in the hallway
The empty rooms in the house
The people struggling in the sun's tears
The Jews dying and being buried
Their scars, the wounds
Weeping in blindness and fear
Behind the wall, so forgotten

The struggle of burned cares
In hidden footsteps of the Jews
Remember their voices
In the darkness of the departed
Soldiers, flames, marching on the innocent
 Millions of children

Shaiski Johnson
My Darkness

My darkness is forgotten souls, 
closed eyes, and unmarked graves
like broken glass just hitting the floor
like a bottomless pit of grief,
shame, anger, fear and worry.

My darkness follows me wherever I go
My darkness is like a person stalking me,
waiting and watching my every move
I can’t get away from its silent, weary shadow
When it’s around, I am on fire, and I’m unhappy.

My darkness is burning horrors,
long-gone sickness, and departed dust
like the unknown witnesses of extreme filth
At night, the sun’s tears turn into golden stars
being scattered in the night sky
My darkness is destruction and collapsed buildings
But in the end, my darkness eats me alive.

Jasmine Murray

Empty Souls

Souls that feel like filth
Souls that were filled with hunger, grief, and unhappiness
All of these souls were silent in the darkness of an unlit candle.

Lots of souls wounded with sickness
The fear of souls saying never again
Flame and pain from Jews
Not wanting to think about their long-lost childhoods.

Yasmin Jones
I Was Not There

I was not there to see all of this. The scars. The wounds. The fears. I am only three years old. So what am I supposed to know?

I’m hiding out in my room, under the bed. My family doesn’t know I am still here. Barefoot. Buried underneath all of my toys.

They took my family... But I don’t know why. All I could see was marching boots. So all I could do was cry. Silently.

I’m in here, hungry. But really don’t care cause my eyes are deceiving me sending me into a nightmare.

Now it’s twenty years later and I am twenty-three. But I will never forget what the Holocaust did to me.

They took away my family. My home. My future. It gave me a history. Shifted me into reality.


But I’m a survivor. I’m tryin’ to tell my story. It’s what I went through. My storm. So all of this is forgotten. And this has all been a dream. A memory. I walk with my head held high. Stepping on all those hell times in my life.

Kiana Murphy

Many Years

Tortured people, army and everywhere dealing with rejection, prejudice, and death. Grief and shame on a still night Darkness, wounding and weeping Unhappy people know that they are going to die. And if you’re silent, you can hear the screams, the bullets out of a gun and the ashes below in the wind of a man that was unappreciated. Star of David, a gold star that is guarded by the north star, they both show the right way, you can believe in it. Sick Nazis demanding what they want but with faith, we will fight back.

Jamal Buggs
Never Shall I Forget

Never shall I forget my grandmother's closed eyes.  
Her death will scar me forever  
And never again will I hear her say  
listen and wait  
All the faces at her burial ground  
and I can see into their hearts

Never shall I forget her empty room  
once full of life  
But now it's a gray haze, blue-black broken glass  
I step into the room and start to cry  
I not only cry, but I cry the sun's tears  
The clouds of memories, pain, and departed doubt.

Never shall I forget the emptiness of my heart  
the farewell of her body as it lay there in the casket  
I'm spoiled rotten by her  
I still cry from time to time

I'm struggling to have a good life  
but I'm weeping with hollow heartbreaks  
and the one thing I remember the most is these words,  
"From ashes to ashes, dust to dust."  
You may now commence her body into the grave

Something that was once alive is departed  
to a place where she deserved a good rest  
I will always reminisce on the memories of my grandmother  
Farewell grandma, and you will truly be missed.  
I love you.

Jasmine Murray

A Dream

When I see something  
I've never seen before  
it is a mystery  
and I sit and observe  
unknown shadows;  
I get scared.  
Its change is golden.  
It looks like a beast.  
I run on, and outside.  
It was a dream,  
a dream I had

Jamal Conyers
My Philosophy

My gaze is a mystery, slowly existing
Creation of a distant sunset
It’s my custom to observe
the ancient destiny of my homeland

And sometimes when I’m alone
I talk to my shadow
I tell her my suffering, my pain, my sorrows
From her, I expect the unexpected
And what I see is a boy and a girl,
afraid to speak their feelings
They both love each other,
but are afraid of the unknown

And I’m very good at love, honor, and trust
because I know that I’m lucky
because I have someone to love
I’m never unheard, and I’m never unloved

I’m capable of motherly love
and I’m used to being spoiled rotten
I believe in love, respect, honesty, and trust
Love is nothing but an emotion
Respect is the way you treat people
Honesty is huge
If you aren’t honest, no one will trust you
Trust is enormous
If you make a promise and don’t keep it
you lose someone’s trust

The world wasn’t made for us to lie,
torture, hurt, or beat
The world was made for us to love each other
If I speak of misery, it’s not because I’m sad
It’s because I’m just trying to pick up
the pieces of my life
To love is a defeat, or someone beat you in a battle
To love is to make sacrifices

Jasmine Murray

Everyday Life

There’s a boy sitting at a desk
admiring the clock ticking on the wall
while staring at the little black girl
with the pretty long black braids.

The girl is wearing thick glasses,
so thick she can look into the future.
While the girl is not paying attention to the little boy,
she is daydreaming of her rotten fruits in her fridge.
Her voice is unheard and unloved;
Words stuck in her mouth won’t come out
and she’s still feeling like jetsam in polluted water
but this is her everyday life.

Yasmin Jones
Portia Spreewell
A lady that is made of onions
on the inside
because of her sour attitude.

Her clothes are out of style,
checkered skirt, plaid shirt
and green and purple socks to top it off.

Her head is smaller than an acorn
but she chooses
to wear oversized hats.

She wears sandals with socks
and likes to dance
but can’t stop.

She dances until dawn (or until her feet hurt)
goes to sleep in bunny pajamas
and knows they are too small for her.

All the food is rotten
because she could care less if her food was either
fresh or twelve years old.

Her mind is blank
because all she thinks of is dancing
and what she will wear the next day.

Portia Spreewell doesn’t like her name
so she changes it into a dancing name,
“Disco.”

But in her filthy heart
she still loves what she does
dancing until dawn.

Kiana Murphy

Writing Poetry
Books are better than bowling
Love is like lined paper
Words are like falling winter snow
Writing is like a speeding cheetah
Reading is like frozen ice
Lined paper is like a kiss of the sun
It burns like words crawling in my fingertips

Renita Williams

Riff About My Father
Sitting there with fear yelling
at the top of his lungs
Whispers between the walls
Floor shaking
Deep tables slammed with a fist

Standing on the stairs
a little girl
staring at the father
breathing with anger
But as he looks at the sweet sugar chocolate pie
he really sees his baby
white cold ice going down her lips

Antoinette Better
Anger

Anger is like fire,  
fire from a burning house. 
Anger will rot in your mouth  
like spoiled milk that has been in the fridge for three months. 
Anger might eat your lungs  
when you drink a nice cold glass of water. 
Anger will fill your body with fear,  
fear to never be happy again  
Anger is not good for the soul. 

Yasmin Jones

Beware

My life is a silver dagger  
used by a madman  
bent on killing and destroying mankind.  
It is darkness in a golden light.  
The knife of danger tells you to back up.  
The blade of power, overthrowing everything  
the handle of speed stabs very quickly.  
My silver dagger of despair will obliterate and annihilate  
every human and animal that tries to stop, hurt,  
or make me eat brussels sprouts.  
My one-way ticket to death dagger is very powerful.  
The thing you need to watch for is not the dagger, but me.  

Damon Kee

Homeland

If the world was the darkness of a shadow  
Perhaps the universal sunset of mystery will move;  
Slowly overflowing with triumph and maybe death  
Suffering for many different reasons.  
While observing unknown destiny outside of this orbit  
Your soul speaks out your tranquil thoughts of the ancient.  

Yasmin Jones
**My World**

My world will consist of everyone  
and no violence, no killing  
and every person will have a soul mate.  
The world we live in is unstable,  
unfit for the universe.  
A big blanket of sorrow over a planet  
that does not belong.  
The earth’s people are unfair and unjust.  
We need to create a perfect world  
and I know they say everyone is not perfect,  
but let’s prove them wrong.  
Just one can change the world and that one is me,  
so listen up and follow my rules so this world  
can be what it’s supposed to be.  
But this is only the beginning of my greatest dream ever.

*Damon Kee*

**From One to Another**

My unhappy world turns  
From misery and woe to just plain awful  
The grief I share with my soul—  
If you tempt it, the cup will tip over  
And the broken glass will turn to anger  
The fierce emotion shall come to grips with reality  
My horrible rage with its massive energy  
The hatred for the world will turn to  
A burning infinite flame of decision  
My fury will subside into a tiny flame and eventually extinguish  
A happy feeling will come  
From a candle as bright as a gold star  
Shining in the age of darkness  
Then with a shimmering tear in the eye of the people  
I say, the world is actually a cool place to live

*Damon Kee*

**My Life**

I got sickness in my life.  
My life is unhappy.  
I have burning in my life.  
I see souls all around me.  
I feel broken glasses.  
I light up a candle.  
My childhood is not good.  
I see darkness in my room.  
I listen to sounds.  
I see flames when I walk.  
I’ve forgotten everything.  
The sun’s tears arc in my eyes.  
I close my eyes.  
I think about my life.

*Stelita Better*
Gone

Some things are better left unsaid
The reason for this is that my dream
that was supposed to be real
didn't appear in front of me
My dream did not become a reality

The flight of a bird is a beautiful sight
I wish I could fly
The sight of a beautiful young animal is great
I wish I was there

Basically, I’m saying
I can’t do things that people expect me to do
I can’t fly. I can’t be a beautiful young animal,
or even an astronaut.
But the life I live is a boring one
full of things that I can’t do

I’m supposed to be a great person
I’m just not there yet
A dark past is revealed and forgiven
Forgotten, gone

Damon Kee

Eyes you don’t have

Is my gaze clear?
Living the life of a person
who is low-down and depressed
walking the streets of a world
that was once nature
turned into a rubbish wasteland.

My philosophy is not to worry about me
Conduct the feeling that life is short
Use it well
To me, life is just a seed in the world we call home.

I believe in believing
and as I believe
hopefully, so can you.

Jamal Buggs

On Park Street

On Park Street
there was a parade of famous people
just giving people money
for being their fans.
Each person would get
ten million dollars;
that meant everybody on the street
was rich, and they moved out
so nobody lived on Park Street.

Beatrice Smoot
Rashida McDonald

Rashida McDonald has fifteen dogs that hate her.
She thinks that they love her dearly.
She eats rotten cheese for dinner and moldy grapes for breakfast.
The only friends she has are the ants in the refrigerator.
Her job pays her one million dollars an hour.
She's an actress—she works in comedies, movies and reality shows.
She decided to go to the army, but she ended up doing a movie about the army.
The title was chocolate chip.
She finally decided to eat healthy food.

Jessica Smoot

My Place

The injured animal crackers poster burned from stress
That blackboard freezes from torture
That unloved book remains rotten, pity
Look to the left—
Don’t you see an unheard stillness from computers?
The flotsam words and kids jetsam into seats
Look to the right, what do you see?
Cherubs giggling and seraphim nod with a smile
The dictionary religion is recovering from lullabies
So if you dare to come in my poetic room
Without poetic thoughts
You’ll be sorry.

Renita Williams

Desdemona Scott

Desdemona Scott eats oranges with peanut butter.
Every night she would cartwheel, until she broke her wrist.
She also has five rattlesnakes and two rats that eat rice.
Desdemona Scott doesn’t have a job, but she finds five cents a day.
Desdemona lives in a dirt hole next to the Empire State Building.
In her dirt hole, she has one broken chair and a rug made out of grass.
Desdemona’s teeth are very dirty, and termites crawl in her mouth.
She doesn’t mind living like this.
She could live better, but she never goes out looking for a job.

Beatrice Smoot
**My Life**

I believe in death because the parents you love died.  
And you won’t see that person again.  
It is a mystery that some kids can’t  
find their mothers and fathers.  
This little girl is looking out of the window  
trying to figure out what happened to her father.  
This little boy is calling his mother  
and it seems that he doesn’t exist.

*Shannon Allen*

---

**Trustworthy**

I am bursting with faith  
open soothing heart that’s covered with weakness  
I strut down these hallways like a Supreme  
I worry about tragic things going on  
I get very exhausted thinking of death  
Something is haunting me that’s called love  
I’m scared

Blood flowing through my bones  
telling me stop worrying about amorous feelings falling apart  
If I open my soul to you, will you crush it?  
My sorrow’s tears filled with cement  
so heavy it pulls my neck forward  
so my tears can break it

*Renita Williams*

---

**I Am**

I am a little girl.  
I like to laugh.  
I dream I will become a princess.  
I like to watch the moon.  
I love diamonds.  
I love the clear blue.  
I’m not fat!  
I’m smarter than a bee with honey.

*Jada Brooks*
New Creations
It is my custom to live in eternal darkness
with no clue of my destiny
and the unknown ruins of my homeland
slowly watching the arrival
of worlds to come.
I believe in mysteries
and slowly observing the world
change into a new world
a world where there’s no fighting
and no killing
and new creations.
Mark Neal

My Life
Falling rose and cherry blossoms
red and blue birds
and a circle of hope
This is my life, calling
like a ringing cell phone
Trees fall, just like my life
turning and flipping,
jumping and skipping
My heart is so black
Why is my life like you?
Almus Bush

Eternal thinking
My gaze is like a mystery of darkness
realized by the afternoon sky
the redness standing for the hurt in my life
my soul is weak
This is the reason for my eternal thinking
Almus Bush

Dragging
Dragging, the old years are on my back
It is hard to get them off
Every time I drag something forward
my past comes back to haunt me
like a ghost
I am dragging all these heavy things of my past—
memories of when I had a cast
and the only way to get it off and get through
is to do what I am supposed to do
Sean Favors
Kaleidoscope

Stars into blue flies,
hearts to red tigers
crawling into stretching gold cheetahs
into green shoes.
Socks falling from the sky
black D’s leading into purple ovals,
soda into glowing
into ghosts howling in the darkness.
Flight of the hurricane
into blindness.
Heat, laughter of the silent guitar,
moonlight into shining feathers.

Shaiki Johnson

My Gaze on the World

My gaze is slowly singing songs of love.
People suffering, because of people passing away
from families and friends.
I think about the world becoming peaceful and nice,
no more violence and death.
I think about going to a neat and ordinary school
with no violence and all that fighting
and getting jumped after school.
I think about what’s going to happen
to my family when I’m not around them.
I think about all the unfortunate people
and all the stuff we have
and what I should be proud to have.
I think about the pain in people’s eyes when I look into them.
I see the darkness in people’s hearts
when something that was unexpected happens.
I see the souls of all the people who passed before me
I see the shadow of me
and imagine how it’s going to look in a few years.
I’m sad when the love and happiness in people’s eyes leave.
I see the anger in people’s eyes every time I see death.
It looks like they want to seek revenge for the one who caused it.

Thomas Whitney
I See

I see a gold rose running into a silver sunflower
I see a jumping tiger leaping into a pile of green snow
I see a tall white oak tree playing with red lions
I see a red and silver bird flying into a golden sky
I see a tall redwood with lots of colorful lights
I see a palace full of flaming stars
I see a velvet tiger rolling in moonlit shadow
I see a bronze bird flying through an ocean of souls
I see a staircase of unbelievable colors
I see moonlight, a candle with silver, gold and green flames
brightening the everlasting rose

Thomas Whitney

Smiling

Smiling is like stepping a foot up.
Smiling is just like me, flying high in the sky,
Dancing, tiptoeing, like a ballet dancer.
My smile is like joy that comes from a new year—
Yes, it is a new year.
And I’m smiling for a great, crushing and loving new year.
No, don’t storm, don’t let the leaves fall;
It’s a new year.
Just have a bouncing, joyful new year.

Dearah Chappell

I’m Burning into the New Year

I’m burning into the New Year
leaving all the heartbreaking years behind me
 telling everyone I forgive them,
 struggling—every time I try to leave
 something keeps pulling me back.
What I once was, I will become.

Antonio Spencer
New Year

I am burning into a new year
and the old year is fighting back
like a bird flying that I catch in a cage.
I am like a wolf in the night
howling at the moon with a pack of wolves
and I live to win.
Like darkness in the light,
the light in the dark,
I am like the sun and the moon

Shaiki Johnson

Newborn Child

It is my custom to take care of a newborn child
that likes the color blue-green
and is not afraid of the darkness
and likes to watch the sunset.

Because this newborn child's life is not so endless,
and I will fill the dream with his destiny
Because I love him so much and it is not his soul that gets me
it is his joy that's sweet.

He came into this world living with his own family
Now I have to go, I said
into my little cocoon, which is the sunflower
Bye, I said. Bye.

Andrea Hermans

New Year

Smoking into the New Year,
with a fire for English
and burning light of math;
bouncing and sliding
with the death of history,
and skating in the halls with flying skates
and tiptoeing to lunch,
racing outside and stomping
down the hallway steps,
popping an dropping
and showing no fear
because it's 2007, a New Year is here!

Dimitrius Winters
The Light of Nature

Red hearts unfold like flowers before they open to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness, drive the dark of doubt away.
Giver of immortal gladness, fill me with the light of day.
Overflowing my everlasting laughter, my shadow changes around me,
my existing soul suffering. The sunset goes down on me.

Antonio Spencer

My Life Today

In the darkness, I stand.
Looking, saying who is this? Why are people acting like that to me?
I see my shadow and say Where did the life go in Shantice?
My friends in the distance from now on.
The reason why I write this poem is because of a person in my school who was my best friend, and the unexpected happened:
The friendship stopped. I think I should cry, but if I stop being me I will not be able to go on with my life. I know my days are counted, so I'm going on with my life. Sometimes I wish I was not born.

Shantice Matthews

In my mind

Twisting red and yellow tulips into star shapes.
Shouting through a green rectangle.
Playing with a bluebird on top of an oak tree.
Yellow fireflies playing with a plastic red rose.

Vincent Walker

I Wish

I wish I was a singer with a song's name
I had a dream
I was in an old country club and it goes like this:
weary, haunting, tragic
I am torn in my life
my life is gone now
it is the end of the year of '06
it is going on '07
it's going to be fun
and the new life of me has come
my mother is back home
the club, the old country club

Nattia Boyd

In my mind

Twisting red and yellow tulips into star shapes.
Shouting through a green rectangle.
Playing with a bluebird on top of an oak tree.
Yellow fireflies playing with a plastic red rose.

Vincent Walker

I Wish

I wish I was a singer with a song's name
I had a dream
I was in an old country club and it goes like this:
weary, haunting, tragic
I am torn in my life
my life is gone now
it is the end of the year of '06
it is going on '07
it's going to be fun
and the new life of me has come
my mother is back home
the club, the old country club

Nattia Boyd
**Trying to Arrive in the New Year ’07**

I am falling into the New Year
and I don’t wanna lean back,
like the gum on the bottom of my shoe.
I’m stomping instead of running
around the track,
as all my old problems won’t leave.
I’m on my knees crying and begging
please, I’m pecking around the corner
so that I can see if last year is gone,
so if the new one has arrived
I won’t be alone.

*Quanika Jackson*

**Joyful**

If Joyful is a person
she is always smiling.
She wears bright and colorful clothes
every day.
If you try to hurt her
she will kill you with kindness.
If you try to bug her
she will ask you to go away, with a smile.
And she would walk away with a nice attitude.

What Joyful is like:
a bright rainbow that wears a white T-shirt
with bluejeans.
And she rides a Lincoln Navigator
has a nice house.
If I was Joyful, I would have a great life.

*Marvin McDowell*

**Colors**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>crimson</th>
<th>cherries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>getting washed</td>
<td>going in your mouth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>lavender</th>
<th>grapes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>chilling in the container</td>
<td>getting ready to rot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>azure</th>
<th>jeans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hanging in the closet</td>
<td>getting put on</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Beverly Wright*
**Anger**

Anger lives in a broken down
home of a barn
for breakfast, it eats hard nails and lemon juice
anger is a killer, fighter, a threat
to all people
it has a vicious Rottweiler for a pet
anger drives a torn up car with the
paint coming off and no rims

When you look at anger
it might make you itch
or maybe die
anger looks in the mirror at
its horrible face
anger wears ugly clothes with rips and tears
has cuts on its face
blood rushing down its body
anger is mean, wrong, hurtful
unpleasant
but sometimes
I love anger

*Markiya Davis*

**Fiery**

fiery is a feeling
inside of me
when I get mad at people
when I get out of hand

fiery is like a ferocious lion
that hasn’t eaten in three years

fiery is like me eating a plate
of hot chili peppers

fiery is like the devil eating me alive
like a bowl of chili colossal

fiery is like the devil sucking us up
in a ferocious fiery tornado

*Keyosha Richardson*
My Emotions

If happiness was a person
he would be so happy
he would always be smiling so hard
that he would have a smile
on his face even when he was asleep
and he would always have a good attitude
and would have all As on his report card

If happiness would wear clothes
he would wear shirts with smiley faces on it
in black, white and all other colors
and he would eat waffles and pancakes
with smiley white syrup and would
drive a light blue limousine with
a cloud on the front and rainbows on the back

_Darren Wilkins_

The Journey of My Dreams

This mesmerizing thought of a private pastime,
a path that leads to a world undiscovered.
These ideas linger into someone’s twisted fantasy,
which somehow messes up mine completely.

As I speed on to what I’m doing,
trying to pursue things unimaginable,
things that frighten them to think about,
but make me brave enough to be about it.

My fascination with this weird fantasyland
is like a vacation from reality,
some sort of acquired taste
that takes long to get used to.

_Maryum Abdullah_

Tinkerbell

Tinkerbell is a
laughing earthquake
she cracks things with her laughter.
Her short green dress is like
a light green carnation
in the nice spring breeze.
Her hair is the pollen of this beautiful flower.
On the other side of Tinkerbell is an erupted volcano.
She can be feisty and rude.
She will sprinkle her magical glitter on you to make you sleep,
so don’t mess with Tinkerbell or her magic will do the trick.

_Danielle Blake_
The Inner Me

I am climbing up a mountain
It is very cold
I sit on top of it while
The sun is going down
The trees are waving hard
And leaning to the side
Like they are dancing and performing
In front of a crowd
The royal blue sky is making me
Sad
When I look at the top yellow mountain
It makes me smile
When I see the snow, it reminds me of
Crystals sparkling on a beautiful dress
The snow is very deep
I am sinking
And snow is getting in my boots
Now as I am getting ready to leave
I take a look back at the mountain
To see that it is very beautiful
And it will always be there

Danielle Blake

Suffocating

I am suffocating
And I just need to breathe
I am suffocating
And I just need to be relieved

Nothing I do is right
Nothing they say is fair
I cry and scream and throw a fit
But no one seems to care

I can't do what I want
I can't stay out late
So now I sit here and write this poem
To release my pain and hate

No one will look far enough
Because I'm lost in my mind
No one will search beyond my looks
To see what they might find

I'm still suffocating
And I still need to breathe
I'm still suffocating
And I...must...be...relieved

Kiera Butler

In Ten Years

In ten years I hope to be a rich man
In ten years I hope I will be alive
In ten years I hope to have a good job
In ten years I hope to have a very big mansion
In ten years I hope to have a good college to go to
In ten years I hope to have a police badge
In ten years I hope I will have my friends
In ten years I hope to still have my pets
In ten years I hope I will still have my life

David Brown
Soul

My soul is like
a dark place
that won’t stop
hurting my soul
unknown, my soul
is changing
into a sunset
in school or outside
of its shadow.
Sometimes I wish
that my destiny will
come to my soul
one day.
Slowly I think it
might come to a
mystery now,
like a blue-green
river that follows
down to homeland.
Unwittingly my
soul is destined
to be a spiral
or a golden
conqueror.
My soul is defeated
by the darkness
homeland
that regrets my soul
from the start
of the afternoon.

Jamie Warren

My Dream

My dream is
further away than I imagine
It’s not that easy to get to
I am struggling with my dream
It seems like no one cares

I wonder if my dream will
be worth living someday
It will take me further than
my mind is reflecting

Dreams
Dreams, oh the wonderful dreams

I believe that my dream is out there
waiting for me
And I believe in myself
That I can and will
go a long way.

Danielle Blake
A Poet

pencils drafting
a paper being taunted
while the lead is coming down like a waterfall
the pencil writes like the tempo in a song
the paper is still being stabbed by the pencil's
every movement
the pencil is the basketball
and the paper is the hoop
the pencil moves with no hesitation
the pencil makes rhymes as if it was
celebrating words
The lines on the paper blind me
with its rejoicing words
as I read them they pop out like
kids on a playground
the words come together
in a poem like a blueprint design
and behind this design
is a poet

Reginald Conway

unknown

nights of thunder
nights of fright
trying to relax
to see tomorrow
everything was private
it seems like it all
was melting away
I feel everything fading
I fear no absence
I wake up as a different person
as I was in my dreams

Brittney Savoy
Life Is a Journey

Life is a journey
struggle through the storm.
Sometimes it is hard to form
the way you want to live it.

People get in trouble
then they chew it up and spit.
After all that it’s probably hard
to get through it.

Some people give up
and let go of hope.
Life should be tight
like new shoes or a new bike.

There are people out here
that are successful you know.
Once you finish,
you can tie it up in a bow.

Tionna Wade

My World

I look towards the crowd
Talking into the microphone with a heroic voice
My words are going through torn heads like a blow of wind
None of my words are left abandoned
Instead they rest in the soothing memories of
people’s heads
And soon we start to see a change in
the world, for violence becomes peace
The prison rate goes downhill
This is my world of striving dreams
There are no more enormous tragedies
This is my oasis
Instead of physical confrontation
There is bursting love
The strut of prejudice is ending
While the march of joyfulness is starting
There are no more crying eyes
But instead preaching souls
This is my place
My dream
My world

Reginald Conway
The Designed Dream

1
My eyes close
as I fall to sleep
My dream is
designed like a candle
The shine of it is like
the glance of tomorrow

2
As I dream the
heartless flame
melts away my dreams
like flowing tears

3
But this dream melts
away slowly
into my memory like
a truck delivery

4
This dream is
bright like
powerful sunlight

5
The wind blows and
the light of the candle
is deceased

6
My dream becomes
a nightmare
My fears intimidate me
while I am weak

7
My dreams are
suffering
they are victims
of guilt and regret

8
I see a light
I walk up to it
trembling

9
As I walk up
to it, I feel
a gift of power
suddenly I see it is

10
My dream
My candle
My memories

Reginald Conway
My Dream

My dream flies
it soars so high
the grace, heart and will
of the suffering stars
have fallen

But, as it flies
a yawn of a gust of wind
whistles my dream to the ground
thrust into the horizon
with a jolt of thunder and lightning behind me

I hear an owl’s call
that lights an infinite flame in my soul
to the point where fear’s absent
I will flap my wings
I will achieve my dream

Aaron Montel Brooks

My Ode to the Toilet

Bowl of beauty,
Seat of sitting
Gets no respect
from the falling
of the paper
to the sounds
of a stretch
Give it some love
Give it respect
Give it some pipes
make the rims look wet
shine the handle
and maybe the lid
Make the bowl
look twinkley and maybe you’ll live
you all don’t know
what I heard from the float
if you don’t respect him
then you’ll die by the bolts

Aaron Montel Brooks

Colorful

When bananas go rotten
they sit and turn black
just like I have
my world was gray at once
not knowing the difference between
black, white, yellow, brown.
But now it’s colorful
I can see now
I must take what I deserve
the color of my skin
does not, does not make me a fool
and the others who fell into
this colorful world of yours
let them fall, but me,
you will not make a fool of me.

Aaron Montel Brooks
What They Mean

Cerulean
  sky
darkening and brightening
hugging the earth tightly

Fuchsia
  soda
quenching my thirst
smelling good

Violet
  shoes
walking with me
keeping my feet warm

Sepia
  skin complexion
walking along the earth's floor
meeting and greeting people of all skin tones

Vermillion
  crayon
writing on a clean sheet of paper
brightening the day

Emerald
  May's
birthstone
beautifying

Eye of the Tiger

To the sound of the crowd
as they cheer or boo at your
reign as champion
you've trained hard, you've fought hard
You've been beaten, battered and bruised
you have given all your heart
and still have the guts to keep fighting
But you've lost it
the hunger, the thrill, the eye
You must train harder
You must fight harder
You will be beaten, battered and bruised
worse than ever before
but you must get up
to keep what's yours
to keep the
eye of the tiger

Aaron Montel Brooks

Rap It Up

Rap is love
to me because
you have feelings
inside of
your mind
the things you
rap about are
from your heart
to your brain
to the inside of
your blood cells
so stay yourself
forever and don't
ever be a stranger.

Emmanuel Youman

Eye of the Tiger

To the sound of the crowd
as they cheer or boo at your
reign as champion
you've trained hard, you've fought hard
You've been beaten, battered and bruised
you have given all your heart
and still have the guts to keep fighting
But you've lost it
the hunger, the thrill, the eye
You must train harder
You must fight harder
You will be beaten, battered and bruised
worse than ever before
but you must get up
to keep what's yours
to keep the
eye of the tiger

Aaron Montel Brooks
What Dreams Are Made of

My dreams are mysterious, dark as the clouds but today I decided to write them down. My dreams are heavy filled with fast cars American dollars and they go as far as the stars.
I had million dollar mansions expensive fashions.
I had to buy the moon to store it all. Then after eating dinner with all winners caviar with the stars I could afford it all.
But then I woke up in the real world eating breakfast, slow cars with white walls and all drywall public schools with bars, it didn’t last long, what dreams are made of

Luqman Abdullah

His Mom Would Tell Him

His mom would tell him to go to sleep but he was worried about tomorrow if he would get to eat.
His mom would tell him to work harder but soldiers came by and started drama.
They told him his mom was stealing paper every week. That moment he started to feel everywhere doubt and deceit.
His mom tried to teach him addition and subtraction.
You should have seen that face, that empty reaction.
His mom would tell him to be strong. But after this day, it didn’t last long.

Luqman Abdullah
Anacostia River

1
Dirty, dirty waves
a rollercoaster

2
All the fish in the sea
just dead as can be
swimming

3
The boat between the seas
rockin’ back and forth
back and forth
upon the seas we rock
until we are sick

4
I smell the river
How does it feel?
Like ocean blues?
It moves . . .

5
The smell
of dirtiness
on my skin . . .
smelly

6
A river.
A boat.
A feeling.
A difference.
A breath.

Bnyonka Simpkins

New Year’s Eve

On New Year’s Eve
It was quiet for a minute
But I guess people had to get out of their houses,
Trading spouses,
Or chasing mouses
I felt bad because people were left out in the cold
Trying to hold on to life,
Because some of them had a wife
Or tried to teach their kids to fly a kite
Or telling them not to fight
And take them to a park and look at the sight

Marquell Bethea

The stillness

The stillness of the trees makes a lullaby as the air breathes.
The pity of a rich guy for a poor guy is unheard of.
The injured heart is no longer pumping.
The burning candle has run out of wax.
The warmth of the sunlight warms your skin.
The motherly way of a mother protects the young without the father.
The baby cousin soon becomes a cherub.
The unfaithful father is no longer in your life.
The girls body soon becomes flotsam in the lake.
The thieves that honor their master rob someone else.
The illusion of your uncle in front of you is no more.
The rotten man reaches his recovery.
The torture of the gun finally kills you.

Nichell Kee
The Window

1
Window that I look through
that has a face
and could show a place

2
Beyond that window
you can see other
people like me

3
You can see the morning and
the night. The coral color flutes
glimmering in the dark.

4
The fingertips of the blackbird
soaring in the sky happy
it has its freedom

5
Through the beach house window
I see the ocean
glaring back at me

6
The sky.
The bird.
The morning.
The night.
The ocean.

My Gaze

My gaze is a clear blue ocean
It is my custom to walk through the waves
And sometimes I look beyond
And what I see each moment I inhale
And I'm very good at each breath I take
I’m capable of going deeper

I believe I will get there
The world wasn’t made for quitters

I have no problems going too deep
If I speak of courage it’s not because I know it’s inside me
But because I’m so afraid of it, and for that very reason

Suffering in Silence

As I walk around millions of people,
all I see are eyes on me.
But there are no smiling faces.
So I run into a building,
crying as I look into a mirror
and see an unpretty mask.

My Window

1
Window that I look through
that has a face
and could show a place

2
Beyond that window
you can see other
people like me

3
You can see the morning and
the night. The coral color flutes
glimmering in the dark.

4
The fingertips of the blackbird
soaring in the sky happy
it has its freedom

5
Through the beach house window
I see the ocean
glaring back at me

6
The sky.
The bird.
The morning.
The night.
The ocean.

Nichell Kee

Bryonka Simpkins
When I sleep

When I sleep in the stars
above there’s an angel who guards
me that has much love.
When I sleep there are petals
of roses that are falling in circles
around me and I try to focus.
When I sleep I dream of the
sierras, how for some reason
I would like to go there.
When I sleep there are dark rags
covering my eyes so that I can’t see
so that it’s pitch black.
When I sleep I think about
what I’m going to do the next day and
if it’s going to be fun. When I sleep I
wonder if I’m going to be safe and
wonder if the rest of my family
is safe. When I sleep I dream
a happy dream and make sure nothing
ruins it. When I sleep I wonder if
I did all my homework and
if I’ll get all of it right. When I
sleep I want to sleep forever.

Nichell Kee

The Forest

Falling leaves tumbling off trees
like a volcanic blast hit fast
the tropical skies changed
like midnight fire.

Kaniece Whitaker

She Runs and Hides

She looks hopeless in the stars
dreading her fear fire sparks
dreams flourish promises dead.
She runs and hides in her castle
called “imaginary.” In her world
all alone, the song of her life plays
over and over again. Freezing she shivers,
hot and she quivers scared she cries
escaping she tries simply to say
so sickening to do.
Lifeless in the stars
facing her fear fire sparks
dreams live promises made.
She runs free and hides behind happiness
in her castle called “happiness.” In her world
not all alone, the song of her love plays
repeatedly. Freezing is no such thing,
hot, she sings scared, she hit
escaping she did sickeningly to say
so simple to do.

Brittany Watkins
Philosophy

My gaze is like a blue green mystery
It is my custom to drive on the dark streets
And sometimes, perhaps, being unexpected
And what I see is sometimes unremembered
I’m capable of having overflowing shadows
out of the window.

I believe in creations in the world
Because I can see it and I like it, the world
was not made for us to kill each other
because after a while we will regret it.

I have no universal circus
I have golden windows that defeat and
change the way people act
If I speak of tranquility it is not
because I know what it means
it is because I like the way it sounds
But because I say it, doesn’t mean that
it orbits around me
My friends sometimes orbit me
like the arrival of a farewell.

To love is suffering unknown.
Ashley Stevenson

All I Can Do is Write About It

All I can do is write
about my voice

Sometimes I wish it was gone
but I don’t have a choice

Wherever I go, I’m
called Lil’ Squeaky

But I like
what they call me

The only thing
I don’t like is when they say
I don’t talk like this

It gets on my nerves and
sometimes I want to hit
them with my fist

But . . . all I can do is
write about it
Keishawna Simms

Kaleidoscope

southern blue car
driving into
eagle rock lions
walking into lemon zest	
tables jumping through
shamrock trees
skating near circles
of orange peel books

Dominique Johnson
Dreams are dreams for a reason

A dream
is really nothing but a wish
a wish that your heart makes while you sleep
dreams are made to be lived out
dreams are supposed to come true
dreams differ
but dreams stay the same
my dream is not like most
I dream to go to heaven
dreams should be of non-materialistic things
because after they're gone, so is your dream
dreams are dreams for a reason

Earl James

My Lovely Dream

Two days ago I had a wonderful dream. Until that morning, my alarm clock went off and woke me up.

I am one of God’s angels. I always see my shadow when it is dark. Sometimes I tremble and get frightened because there are no lights on in my house when everyone is asleep.

The shining light was right in my face like it was going to melt me away. So I yawn and get out of bed and think, what a beautiful day. I glance out of my window and see everyone outside.

Latia Pimble

What Is Love Without a Dream

My dreams are full with love and hurt
My heart hurts like the flame of lightning
My dreams fade away as the night without stars
My dreams are private as my heart is pain.
As the shadow of my heart beats,
the more pain I’m suffering to prosecute my dreams.
As the light blinks and the wind blows,
my heartaches find nothing but love and pain.
The gift of my dreams that I left behind for love.
Tomorrow is not relaxing the thunder of pain and fright.

Kiarra Payton
The Window

the window is open
like the eyes of an infant child. I was pulled in.
Sunken in by the weariness of this fiery red room
of my love, forced to be happy, sad, I become.
My soul is twisted into hurricanes of mixed emotions
I have no clue what my life would end up like
if I escaped from this room.
When I looked up from the horrible yet lovely beating that love gave me, that window was closed shut. Now I know why I had fallen. . . .
I had fallen in, to fall in love.

Brittany Watkins

I come and stand

I come and stand for me
to be me not to be you
to show how I can be myself and not be you
not be a label and feel discovered
looking at the reflection of me
knowing that I will be something and not to feel unpretty or unseen
I come and stand
I come and stand so everyone can see who I am

Brittney Savoy

To be found

My dream is an inspiration.
It really comes from the heart.
My dream comes in all different sizes like dragons and their wings.
For me to get to my dream I have to get through this twisted life.
I have to get there before the midnight hour.
I can’t let my dream melt away.

If I don’t get to my dream, it’s going to feel like there is no tomorrow.

Denisha Bolden
Sadness

dripping green crush
wastes from the bush
a girl is crying because of
the sad song playing
in her head
the color of cherry cobbler
is set upon the girl’s face
while tears bounce beside it
the triangle from the
chair rocked back and forth
the square window
opened wildly
while wind from the tree blows
and dogs the color
of Hawaiian passion
bark toward the wild grapes
which hang from the tree

Danielle Stover

Just Beautiful

beautiful exotic flowers
flowers that are dying and
going to heaven
song birds singing jazz
and a lot of different things
summer heat
giving me suntans
peach butter dripping
and tasting so good in my cheeks

Keona Powell

The Struggle

As a young boy, you walk down the street worrying
if you’re going to get shot or not and just thinking
about the struggle and that’s not a good thing.
But in the end the struggle is
not something you want to think about
and the pain is like having a
lump in your throat
and feeling like a lady having a baby
or like someone getting shot.

Marquette Price

Dear Father,

There are some things
That I would like
To say to you
I would like to say
That I want to see your face
Again, so I could remember
If you didn’t get shot
I would still be able
To see your face, then
I would not have
To replace you.

Theodore Washington
Hangin' Out Wit' Friends

Up in Iverson Mall,
Singing the blues, dancing,
Remembering the lazy bums on the bus
Watching candy machines
Stealing from kids
Seeing rent-a-cops chasing thieves
Walking, walking
With makeup glistening and
Shining like a crown
Raging madness going through my soul
Running into a cobweb and
Bones aching because of stress
Seeing the generation before me
While eyes blinking, erasing, and
Making the mind blank.

Monae Smith

Questions for God

Why is the sky blue. Why are people
People. Why are there blacks and whites.
Is there really a heaven or hell, then what happens
To a changed man in a cell. Why is earth
Called earth. Why is the milky way the galaxy.
Why do people have noses, have lungs.
Why do people eat to stay alive. Why did Adam
And Eve have to die. Why do people look alike.
Why do people look different. What is gay, what is straight.
What is God. What are the cross roads. What is heaven.
Why do babies die before they are born. Why are there schools.
Why is there an NBA?

Larry West

I Am Your Sun

When you wake up in the morning
don't you see something
bright shining on you,
that's me I am that sun that shines
bright in the sky.

You could never look me in the eye
because I will blind you.

That's me, the one who
makes you feel happy.
I am the sun you ask for when
it rains or snows.

Nicole Williams

I Am Your Sun

When you wake up in the morning
don't you see something
bright shining on you,
that's me I am that sun that shines
bright in the sky.

You could never look me in the eye
because I will blind you.

That's me, the one who
makes you feel happy.
I am the sun you ask for when
it rains or snows.

Nicole Williams

I Am Your Sun

When you wake up in the morning
don't you see something
bright shining on you,
that's me I am that sun that shines
bright in the sky.

You could never look me in the eye
because I will blind you.

That's me, the one who
makes you feel happy.
I am the sun you ask for when
it rains or snows.

Nicole Williams
My Letter to a Relative In Jail

Are you determined
To get out

Well I am too
To get out
The streets
Gang bangin’
Drug sellin’
People dying

(Huh)

More like killing
Or being the victim

Will you struggle
I am too

Struggling to get out
The hood.

Your Nephew,

PS. Keep Struggling.

Jamal Clark

Aris Poetica #1

What is a poem?
A note of how you feel

What you think of life or how
you like to live it.

To me a poem is more than
that

A poem is life

Yeah, one big story.

One exciting moment after
the next.

One harsh moment after
Another

A poem

Until then - a poem is
whatever when you live
it out.

Jamal Clark

I Am

I am a beautiful, Intelligent Black Woman
I am the hope for all black children out here today
You shall know me as Sherita Angelica Grady
Not as a nigga
I am a queen
Not a nigga

Sherita Grady
Today’s News

Redskins losing all games.
265 people killed last year.
265 people killed this year.
66% raise in shootings
54% raise in robberies
2 weeks ago the Colts breaking their winning streak.
The Bears punt returner Devon Hester running 2 tds back breaking a record.
The college senior Troy Smith winning the Heisman trophy
The disease e coli spreading in vegetables.
An argument with Eddie Murphy about pregnancy.
The snow is coming into dc.
Shopping for the holidays.
The theories of fish having mercury in them.

Trevon Jackson

Living with Anger

I was 6 years old
when my parents ran away.
I was stuck inside
a broken life
I couldn’t wish away.
She was perfect, she had
everything and more.
And my escape was hiding out and running
for the door.
Somebody listen please,
it used to be so hard.
Being me.
Living with the anger.
Living in a dream
trying to find a hand to hold.
Now that I am wide awake
my chains are finally free.
So don’t feel sorry for me.

Alishia Davis

Football

I know

scared scared scared
run
explode/ (just like Clinton Portis)
the football field

Run
catch
spin
do what you have to do so you can’t get hit.

You don’t want to
have
fear in your H.E.A.R.T

Most
of all  J.U.S.T  H.A.V.E  F.U.N  D
O
running, catching, and
all the requirements for
O
N
G

Trevon Jackson

D
O
I
A
L
L

49
Poetry don’t mean nothing in Congress Park. It’s all rap and R&B. When we think about poetry, we don’t care. But when I hear about it, I think I can have a career in it.

When I write poetry I always write about my life and where I’m from.

The only people I hear talking about poetry is Mr. Dwayne and my fellow classmates.

When you think about poetry, Redz it’s just like go-go and C.T.W.P (Condon Terrace Wahler Place). That’s what CP thinks about poetry and what Redz think about poetry and what I think about poetry.

Trevon Jackson

A Poem For Myself

I was born in Washington, D.C. I used to come outside with no shoes on my feet. I used to run and play in the water and mud and dirt all together mixed it up with my feet and used to stomp on it and splashed it in my face and on my body.

Donna Washington

Dear Dad,

I wish I can see you again, you were my best friend and also my father. I love you and my mother. I wish I can see J-Rock, Laylow, Shaun, Hakim, Mickey, Popcorn, Regal, Ty, Lil Dre, Gee, Gary, Shine and Yoshy. We miss all you soldiers, all of you soldiers stayed strong. We love y’all Da alley miss y’all, we wish y’all was still living so we could still be happy. Roses, Dee, Boo-Boo we will see y’all when y’all get out. Love y’all.

Delvonte Jones

With winter joy, The sun’s breeze, Look out the window, You’ll see frozen leaves When daybreak comes, I try to embrace All the cool mist around my face Then I stop and enjoy the silence Away from profanity and violence

Jasper Hicks
I Want Our Neighborhood to Be Built Up Better

I want to play on our football field

I want to be able to be on our basketball court.

I want to have fun in our rec.

I want for our house to be big.

I want to move the baseball stuff off of the field, make it a real football field.

I want Condon Terrace to stop suffering.

*Delvonte Jones*

What Should Be On The News

The news should talk about the schools like we need the Vending Machine fixed in the lunch room.

We have mouses running from behind walls and under the heater and we don’t have grey mouses we have white mouses and they ugly and they stink.

Our heater needs fixing and it is too hot in this school. We need some cold air.

*Donna Washington*

I Show Love By

I show love by helping people out like if it was an old lady, and she has bags in her hands and it looks like she needs help, I will ask her, “Do you need help?” If she says yes, I will help her with her bags and then I will ask her what her name is.

*Dominique Courtney*
Football

A pulse, no heart beat. Forget tomorrow, what your heart beating for you're scary.

I want to be on the field like my man T Roy was

I want to go to the hole like my brothers told me.

I want to do it for my

I want to go to the best college.

I want to run like lightning.

I want to hit like Roy, go for the best quarterback arm.

Fly like an Eagle. Be like a Falcon.

Delvonte Jones

Slave

slave- a slave is a person who is bound in servitude. And discriminated by one who is forced against their will and controlled by one. Beaten. Hung by the neck. Lynched because the color of the skin. Controlled by dominating influences. Taken from their land on boats, dying from the smell, starved by the white man. Work hard labor. Freed by the black man.

Anastasia Fleming

My Thinking AKA Pain

Why do I feel this pain inside, why do I cry out at night at the thought of me not being home, me not being there with my family and friends. They tell me this is my family. Nope, it's not. This is where I like, no it's not. No I shouldn't. If you don't have love for me. Why must I ask to go to the bathroom why am I not going freely. Go and come when I please. What? No. I really miss my sister and my brother but when I was free I could not stand them being next to me. What I feel is pain.

Anastasia Fleming
An Incomplete List of People I Wish Were My Teacher

Martin Luther King, Jr.
Michael Jackson
My mother
Michael Jordan
Tiger Woods
Jet Lee
Tom Cruise
Tom Brady
Martin
Jesus Christ
Joseph Woodard

A More Grown Life

Shay, brown skin, always with plaits in her hair. She is disrespectful, but doesn’t know it. Only twelve years old, people say she go hard, so she tried to act bold.

She looks grown but is not, thinks she’s ready for a kid trying to live a more grown life. So Shay stays out all night.

About her age she tells a lie, every night he makes her cry. Shay wants to leave and so she tries, she asks questions from the sky.

Someone who loves her gives her help, tells her everything has been dealt, dreams about getting beat with a belt. He tries to imagine what she felt.

Amber Williams

Today’s News

Women driving in pain. Heart biting, can’t breathe. Her children screaming. Stop! From the top of her lungs, body shaking hands tumbling. Crying in fear, the face of guilt in her eyes and the water drips of sweat down her cheeks.

That child’s heart is broken with hurt inside, and given that hurt, pain and tumbling feelings to the mother that gave birth, and life for that child. And Today’s News is that woman is still living.

Antoinette Better
An Incomplete List of
People I Wish Were Alive

Uncle Pedro
Aliyah
Malcolm X
Martin Luther King
Rosa Parks
James Brown
Harriet Tubman
Frederick Douglass
Coretta Scott King
Aunt T
Colletta Paylor

Little Girl and The Squirrel

Da way dat I express
my luv is I will draw
a little girl with blonde
hair, blue eyes, and very
light skin playing with a squirrel.

Luv can be contagious
but cannot be seen
like a little girl with blonde
hair, blue eyes, and very
light skin playing with a squirrel.

Terrance Nails

You Figure it Out

In an ancient time
an unforgotten dream
that scared me
and took my heart
through a dangerous pulse.

Mortal revelation
going through my restless soul
seeing:
that person
that thing
that body.

Wounded dream
in a luxurious fortress
releasing
the tenderness from my mind.

Cruel ember
come from his uprooted heartstrings
struggling asunder like
a withered lantern
in mid-day light.

Monae Smith

Poetry is

Poetry is
Outrageous,
Emotional,
Music

Lawrence Carter
Go Through

When you go through life you really never know who you are until someone you love dies but as you go on through life, you recognize what you lost when you wonder why things are gone.

The things I’ve been through is like a broken glass and rain drops that go drip to the ground and it is like someone dancing around, prancing on the ground.

Pauline Holsinger

Who I Want to Be Like

I want to
dunk like
Jordan, heist
like Kobe
sing like
lil Boose
fight like
Ali, run.
I want to
fly like eagles
spy like
a fish
climb like
a monkey,
jump like
a rabbit,
hop like
a kangaroo.

Antonio Brown

Mistakes

Mistakes is like a course. It follows you around the place. It’s like the wraps of a twister it repeats all over again.

Mistakes, a list of words filled with letters and numbers create a bang with a golden kiss fumble weight lightning with a touch of lips. Hear lightning scream from the top of your lungs. Stop!

A mistake you make, deal with it, learn from it, my course, my mistake, my word repeat.

Antoinette Better
Show Love

I show
my
mother
love by
picking up
all my dirt
like Mike
Varbel picks
up a forced
fumble.
I fix
my bed
to make it
look neat.
I tackle
the floor
with a
vacuum
to show
her love.

Damian Lee

You’ve Been There

You’ve been here for me all these years
You are always there to wipe my tears
You’ve been there when I called your name
You have never hurt me or put me to shame
I’m glad God put you here to show me the way
I’m so glad you are here to stay
You are my guide, you are my light
I don’t know what I would do if you weren’t in my sight
You were there when I was feeling down
You were there to turn my frowns and sorrow around
So thank you mommy for your tender love and care
Because of that, you will always be there

Danielle Blake

A Special Woman

I respect you and love you with all of my heart
Because you are an artist and I am your work of art
I have cherished you since day one
Won’t leave until your job is done
You raised me to be a man
When I did wrong, you helped me understand
When I was lost, it was you I found
And you stood by my side all year round
It’s hard to stay mad at you
Because you look so beautiful
I’m so thankful and committed to being your son
Forever and ever, my mother is number one

Eric Quarles
The Beautiful Woman

The beautiful woman on earth
The one who brought me on this earth
She’s the best
She’s the one who filled my heart with true love
She’s the best
She is a pure goddess
She’s the most loyal person you’d ever find
So I wrote this to the true woman in my life
My mother

Jannett McCoy

Who Am I?

I am a scared girl
Trying to build a better future with my sister
I am a Queen who worships God
I am a poor girl trying to fulfill my acting career
I am a light-skinned girl
Who is always being called white
But I am actually a black queen
Mixed with a lot of ethnicities
I am a girl who is scared
To live because I am scared
Of getting shot
I am a lonely girl
Whose dreams might not come
Until I turn 40 years old
I am a loving girl
Who shows love to any person
Who shows me love
I am a ghetto girl
Who lives around fights
Who lives around drug dealers
Who lives around dope fiends
Who lives around people who have sex for money
People who shoot at their own family
I am a girl who has family and friends fighting
A black-on-black crime
Whose fight aids it and they don’t even know it
I am a girl whose dreams have yet to be answered

Manaiza Kelley

This is how I show love,
I show love by

On the desk
banging, banging, banging
love
you will hear from
the banging

I feel you son

You like my sister
laughing when I am
in trouble, she would
get in my face
and laugh.

But that’s how we show love.

Ashley Stevenson
Girls

Most people think that girls were put on this earth for entertainment and pleasure
But as young men and boys, we should know better
On how to judge a girl by just the way she looks
By not believing what we see on TV, pictures or in books
At times we may neglect them, abuse and control
But we don’t know what they can do to make our minds and intelligence unfold

Marcus Johnson

A Dream

Unity, togetherness
Is what I wish upon

A peaceful world
Why can’t we live in one?

Gentle mother sleeping on air,
In her room
Yes, she’s there

Without one eye open
She sleeps among the stars

In an evil world
This is what she calls home

But now she wakes up
One eye at a time
After dreaming about the universe
Then spreads her arms and starts to fly

But as mother seems to soon notice
Her life is a dream

Kiera Butler

Sleep

Sleeping so beautifully
She looks so peaceful
Dreaming upon the universe
Like she was put to sleep by a curse
As she’s dreaming of her mother
She looked so stiff as her brother
All of a sudden
She dreams she’s in a jungle
So scared she curled in a bundle
Then she closed her eyes and counted to ten
Then she felt a great wind
It was Hurricane Katrina
And the ground got wrinkled
Then she woke up at home
But still thinking of people in the superdome

Jasper Hicks
**My Pain**

My rage, my pain  
My loss, my gain  
The shirts I’ve stained  
People I’ve blamed  
The people that bled  
The blood, sweat, and tears they’ve shed  
Doesn’t mean anything—our lives are almost dead  
From the 911 “accidents”  
To the wars in Iraq  
And the tragic losses by “The Man”  
To the kids in the ghetto having problems  
To the grown-ups still trying to solve them  
My struggles, my pain  
Something I want to lose, but always going to gain  

_Eric Quarles_

**Wisdom**

I know I am a child  
I don’t know if I will become an adult  
I thought I knew what I was doing with my life  
I didn’t think I knew what my life was doing with me  
I understand how to live my life  
I didn’t understand how to let my life live me  
I know the meaning of life  
I didn’t know life knew the meaning of me  

_Lawrence Carter_

**Dreaming**

Beautifully sleeping at home  
Dreaming about unity with her mother  
In a peaceful world with no violence  
And the universe is an island  
With a gentle breeze every now and then  
Then she says to her mother how lovely she looks  
Wishing that she would not wake up  
Then the alarm comes on when she opens her eyes  
And starts crying  

_Jannett McKoy_

**Wake up**

Peaceful, lovely  
Caring about the world  
Gentle, dreaming  
Always in a daze  
Helping, hoping, caring about me  
Never a beautiful universe  
Surfing in itself  
Sleeping nervous  
Scared of what you can be  
Hoping the next day  
You wake up to see  

_Brittany Johnson_
My Life

My life is like a movie
People always acting in it
Faking it
My life is like football games
Me always running yards
My life is like popcorn
People always popping up
My life is like a baseball game
I’m always running home
My life is like school
I’m always working
My life is like a clock
I’m always ticking
My life is like a jam
It’s hard to get through

Antonio Alston

Show Love

You can show someone
love by giving them
a card or writing them
a letter. That’s how much
you love them or you
can give them same
flowers if they are
Sade or they are not
feeling good on a bad day.

Lance Favors

Untitled

I like fall
It’s the best
You get to go outside with a tank top
No vest
You wake up, feel the breeze
And then the fresh air
Not hot and stuffy
You get to smell
The good smell
Of pancakes, eggs, bacon, sausages, grits
…all that good stuff
But one thing
All this good stuff
Happens in North Carolina,
Not in D.C.
Where you wake up to a bowl of cereal
That’s not good for you

Isaiah Jackson

Summertime

Summer is cool
You go places like ESPN Zone
Not just sitting at home
Watching the kids ride their bikes all day long
Or listening to a famous singer sing a song
Well, you could do this everyday
After doing your chores and homework, you go out and play
Just living the life

Jaquan Footman
Monae's Day

Crescent moon
shining down
on the Anacostia River

Report card
being naughty
but flowing like ocean waves

Suspension
from the freedom
while being on that
rugged old plantation

Fingertips
grow like trees
mind gleaming like the sun

Monday
classroom's lily blooms
and blossoms like
children and flowers.

Monae Smith

Untitled

I am like the sky
I get mad
I am like thunder
And strike people like lightning
I am like a flood
Just running through people
Like a mad person
I am like a mother bird
Who attacks people when they mess with her family
I am like a computer
That breaks down a lot
And it takes a long time to recover

Martha Hardman

I Am

I am a child of God
I am a scholar
I am the first round draft pick
I am the positive hurricane
I am a dreamer
I am the impact pf the future
I am the flesh and bones
I am the diagram of life
I am the prospect of college

Curtis Canty
**My life is like**

My life is like a game
All types of games
My life is like San Andreas,
Because people get shot everyday
Because people look like someone
Or guess who is who
Or people getting killed
Because they are going in the wrong direction
At the wrong time
Like the game that is too fast
But for real,
I don't know what my life is like
My life is like it is make-believe

**Quintin Pimble**

**Pleading Triumph**

Pleading and pouring out my soul
complicated, filled with triumph
living with a splintered memory
feeling an abyss
from this gravitational pull
feeling driven to destruction
trying to comprehend
instead of mourning
waiting for my
worshipped reign's arrival
trying to be the evening star
instead of tarnishing
a promiscuous life
giving a celestial body, filled
with illusions and in disguise
looking at the scarlet sun
trying not to manipulate
my inner self
recapturing dreams.

**Monae Smith**

**Untitled**

We are on a journey to a place
Where they are having dead basketball courts
And where the drug dealer passes weed hand-to-hand
They think they aren't getting caught
But all they have to do is sit and think
Why the court houses,
The policemen,
The whole legal justice system
That is supposed to be on your side
But at the same time
The same people who are helping you
Are making more jail houses than schools,
Placing more drugs in the streets
Why, I say,
Are we helping them kill us?
We are helping them place us in jail
Then maybe we are niggas
No!
I am no nigga
I am a smart, loving, colored man
Who will make it

**Demarco Singleton**

**Pleading and pouring out my soul**

**Pleading Triumph**

**Pleading and pouring out my soul**

**complicated, filled with triumph**

**living with a splintered memory**

**feeling an abyss**

**from this gravitational pull**

**feeling driven to destruction**

**trying to comprehend**

**instead of mourning**

**waiting for my**

**worshipped reign's arrival**

**trying to be the evening star**

**instead of tarnishing**

**a promiscuous life**

**giving a celestial body, filled**

**with illusions and in disguise**

**looking at the scarlet sun**

**trying not to manipulate**

**my inner self**

**recapturing dreams.**

**Monae Smith**

**My life is like**

My life is like a game
All types of games
My life is like San Andreas,
Because people get shot everyday
Because people look like someone
Or guess who is who
Or people getting killed
Because they are going in the wrong direction
At the wrong time
Like the game that is too fast
But for real,
I don't know what my life is like
My life is like it is make-believe

**Quintin Pimble**
Who I Am

I'm not a nigga
I don't pull triggas
I want to be a millionaire and count figures
Benjamins, of course
Never will I get stopped by force
Maybe by brain
Because I'm trying to be like Fat Joe and make it rain
Racist cops
Coming up with plots
To stop the black Man
Who thinks that life is about keeping a gun in your hand
So don't call me a nigga to try to put me down
Because you're wasting your time
When you look like a clown

Eric Quarles

My day in North Carolina

In North Carolina
We played basketball
We listened to rap music
You can feel the breeze
As the sun sets and rises
We ride,
Look for something to do,
Then we stop, drop, and roll to the fire

Richard Jackson

The D.C. Creative Writing Workshop is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing quality creative writing instruction to students in economically underserved areas of Washington D.C. One hundred percent of every donation goes directly toward our creative writing programs at Charles Hart Middle School, Simon Elementary, and Ballou High School, allowing our students to work with professional writers-in-residence in the classroom, the Drama Club, the Writing Club, and the Literary Magazine Club.

Show your support for hArtworks by mailing your tax-deductible contribution to:
The D.C. Creative Writing Workshop
601 Mississippi Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20032

If you have books or equipment to donate, call us at: (202)297-1957

Or check us out on the web at www.dccww.org
This magazine was made possible by funding from:

Anonymous
Children’s Fund of Metropolitan Washington
Fannie Mae Foundation
Herb Block Foundation
Hitachi Foundation
John Edward Fowler Foundation
Mattel Children’s Foundation
Meyer Foundation
Moran Family Fund
The International Monetary Fund
The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation
The Tom Lane Fund
The World Bank
Wachovia Foundation
Weissberg Foundation

Artwork by Thomas Whitney and Tiara Mason