



HARTWORKS

Spring 2018

\$10

The Charles Hart Middle School Literary Magazine



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Inside front cover, l-r: Kimari King, Naiya King

Introduction

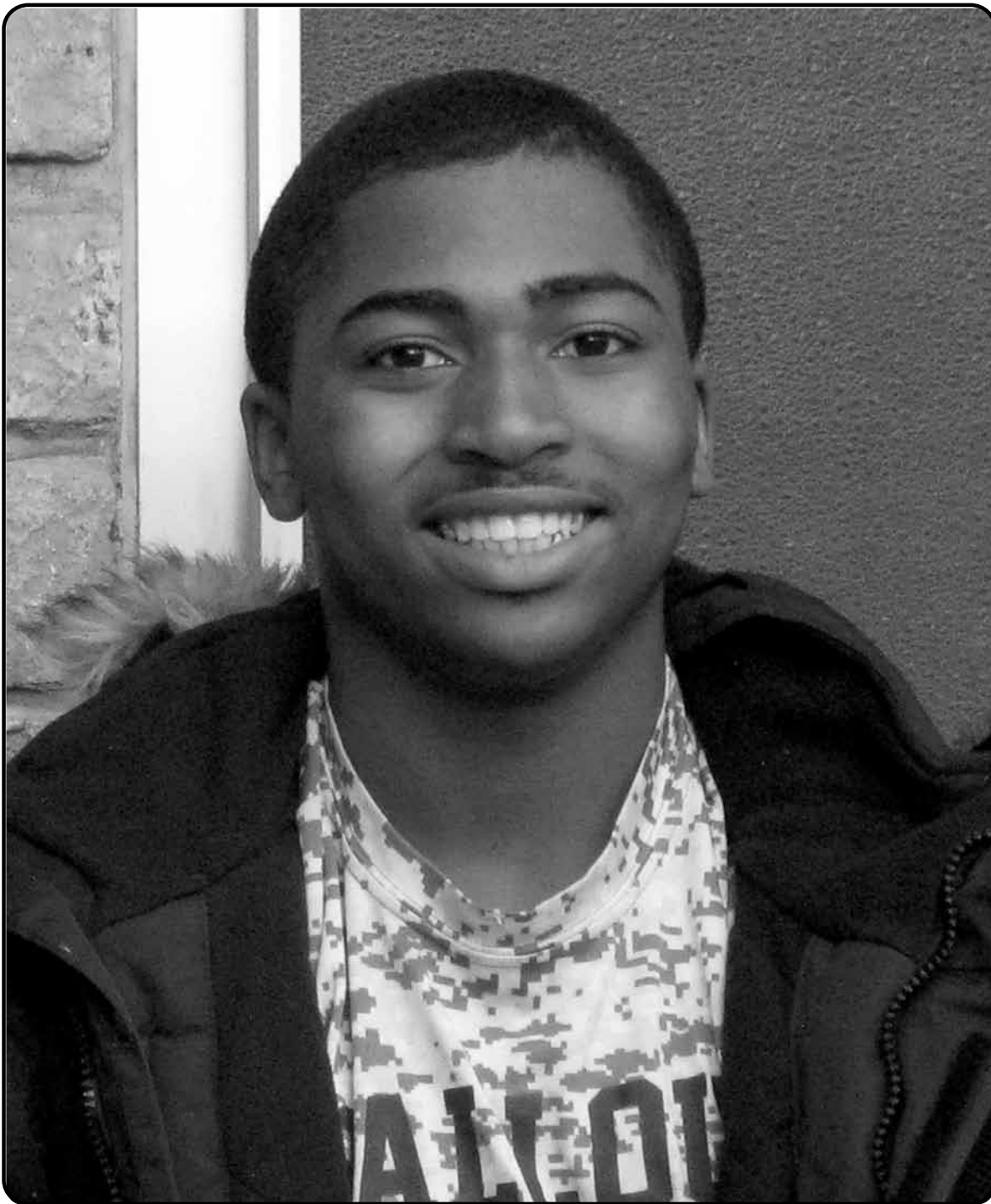
Welcome to *hArtworks*, the nation's only inner-city public middle school literary magazine, written and edited by the students in the after-school writing club at Charles Hart Middle School. *hArtworks* is published through a collaborative effort between the school and the D.C. Creative Writing Workshop, an independent non-profit working to create a literary renaissance in Southeast Washington. Now in its sixteenth year, *hArtworks* gives our young writers the opportunity to exercise their creative energies, speak their minds, and be read by an audience throughout the city. The 2018 edition of *Poet's Market* recognizes *hArtworks* as "an outstanding example of what a literary journal can be (for anyone of any age)."

We have many friends who have helped to make *hArtworks* possible, and we would like to express our gratitude to them. Our sincerest thanks go out to the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Children's Charities Foundation, the City Fund of the Greater Washington Community Foundation, the Clark-Winchcole Foundation, Commonwealth Foundation, D.C. Commission on the Arts and Humanities, Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation, Harman Family Foundation, Corinna Higginson Trust, Horning Family Fund, Lainoff Family Foundation, Marpat Foundation, Cathy and Mark McNeil-Hollinger, New York Avenue Foundation, Luther I. Replogle Foundation, Hattie M. Strong Foundation, Holly Syrrakos, Gail Oring and GO! Creative, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Arena Stage, the Shakespeare Theatre, Woolly Mammoth Theater, Jack and Monte, Tollefson and Company Investment Management, our friends at Popeye's on Malcolm X Ave., Barbara Bainum, Fritz Edler, Joseph and Lynn Horning, and Robert Johnson.

Our friends at the Far Southeast Family Strengthening Collaborative also deserve our thanks for giving so much time and energy to our after-school Writing Club, as do our volunteers, Steven Brown, Jessica Carpenter, DeArren Dawkins, Bernitta Johnson, Daquan Johnson, Damon Kee, Gregory Nickens, Isaiah White, and Anthony and Annette Williams.

Special thanks for the hard work and dedication of the D.C. Creative Writing Workshop Board of Directors: Dr. John Walton Cotman, Dr. Susan Gerson, Brian Gilmore, Helen Hooper, Bernie Horn, Bill Newlin, and Nancy Schwalb.

We would also like to thank the following administrators, teachers, and staff who are our partners in this endeavor: Principal Charlette Strickland; Assistant Principals Ms. Samecia-Muriel Broussard and Dr. Sharon Armstrong; Ms. Sherry Dailey, Ms. Pamela Dixon, Ms. Latavia Drakeford-Allen, Mr. Craig Duchemin, Ms. Nijma Esad, Mr. Jamal Kennedy, Ms. Jasmine McGill, Mr. Derrick McRae, Ms. Rashimah Nixon, Ms. Sheranada Robinson, and Ms. Eleanor Seale.

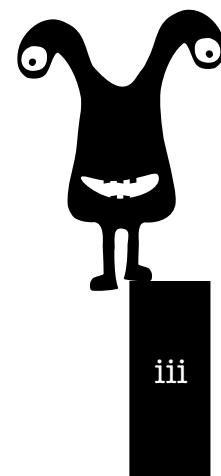


JOEVON SMITH-PATTERSON
JULY 17, 2000 –
JANUARY 29, 2018

This issue of *hArtworks* magazine is dedicated to the memory of Jevon Smith-Patterson, an alumnus of Charles Hart Middle School, student at Ballou, and stalwart member of the writing club.

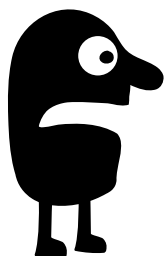


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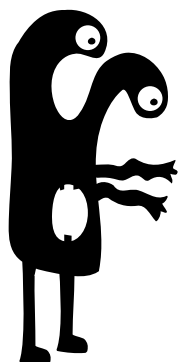




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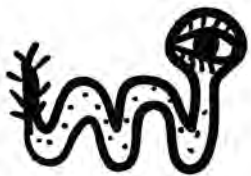


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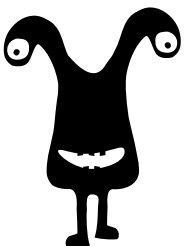


Tommy Fridle

My "A" Day

I would hang out with my friend Elijah
and eat Subway with hot sauce
and then am flying,
listening to my music—it's Friday,
my favorite day of the week!

Ricardo White



Let it be Unknown...

Let it be known that the new year
has almost come to an end.

Let it be known that the year 2017
has finally turned me around.

Let it be mixed feelings and emotions.
an alluring trend;
and a common blend
of happiness, sadness, pride,
laziness, rage, peace, anger and fury;

To create a whirlwind collision of lightning,
wildfire in a blizzarding typhoon of the unknown.

You know, I'd hate to postpone
but let it be known
that I can't condone
the living of the unknown.

Jahir Gray

My Life

Spinning into a new world
not broken, but awakened;
Razor sharp fangs,
good for leaving my venom in last year.
Acid oozes from my heart.
Spiteful, I leave the year to move on:
Rotten attitude
Monstrous mouth
Overwhelming problems, but I hang on.
Drizzle, but I stay dry:
Fighting through hate
Sliding to a new year, dragging me down
Smiling through the hate
Still winning.

Trevonne Joyner



*l-r: Christa Madikaegbu,
Armani Thornton*

What Is a Poet?

A poet is one in disguise;
A poet is one tough twin
who brings enemy tormentors to their demise.

A poet is a victim of gratuitous sadism.
A poet is one with visions of widespread destruction.

One who has risen over the crisscross antics
of inbred fools and dulls;
One who has invaded to evict
the over-fortunate numbskulls.

A poet is one who gets
the good times, not the bad;
Nothing prissy or pretentious,
nothing condescending,
just a world to be had.

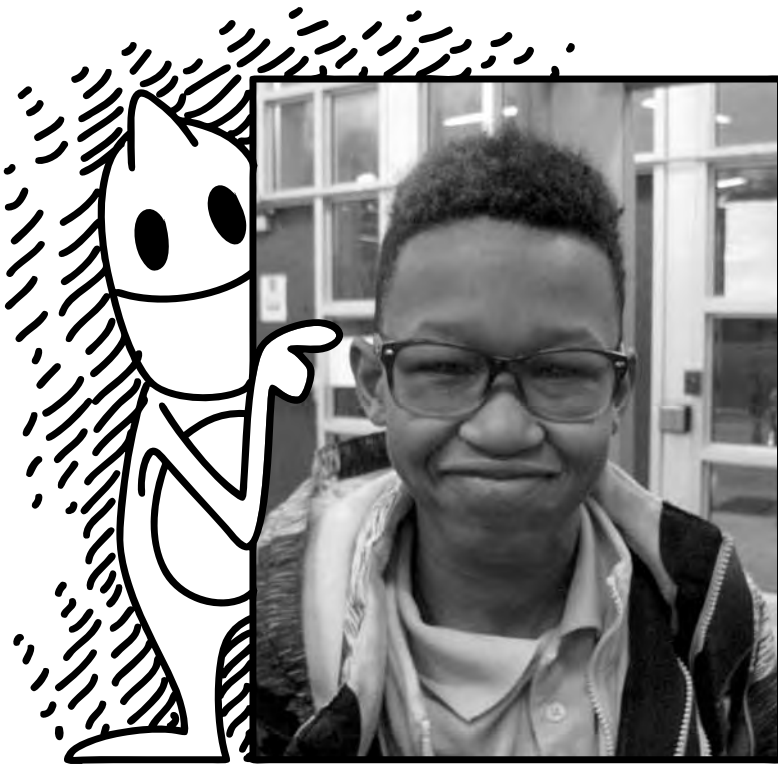
Jayden Gray

Phantom

The name people call me
when I fall asleep, people call me
to wake me up inside;
and when I am hurtful I feel bad,
and when I am in the dark,
people call me echo.
And I can splinter
because I have a sword;
and I have silver eyes.
I'm called Phantom.

Ricardo White





Ethan Atkins

How to Be a Great Poet

1. Be ready to think about what you have to write.
2. A great poet has to be innovative and creative.
3. A great poet is a long-lost soul in the darkness.
4. A great poet must always speak the truth.
5. Don't worry about right or wrong answers.
6. Every poem should have a beginning, middle and end.
7. Don't worry about what anyone else has to say.
8. Be true to yourself at all times.

Jahir Gray

Arman

His name is Arman,
known as Armie.
His favorite place to be is
at the carryout, or Popeyes.
You know him by his full name
and the silliest sister beside him.

His laughter is funny
like a jumping horse,
but his sadness can be a heartbreak.

I've seen him work together
and play a lot, not
being serious sometimes.
He is loved by his parents and family.

Vincent Wingfield

Twinz vs. the Whole World

Hey y'all want to know something?
People look at us like we're dumb,
look at us like were aliens,
like we look like scum.

But y'all phonies look like a bunch of
over-misfortunate, numb-skulled bums.
Your demolition is our elevation,
and domination is our reputation.

We've been through this for 14 years in the past.
You keep it up, we'll knock you out—
14 centuries without the sass.
Powerbomb you to the ground,
like Roman Reigns, in just one round,
then leave you, alone, in the lost and found.

Jayden Gray



Evening Song

When there was moonlight
and people were dancing
it was full of brightness,
and everybody kept their eyes closed
until it was darkness
and people got scared.
It was slippery, and everybody
was falling
and went to sleep
until finally, they were awake.

James Stewart



l-r: James Stewart, Elijah Hamilton-Todd

If I were...

If I were the sun, I'd shine so bright,
I'd burn your eyes out.

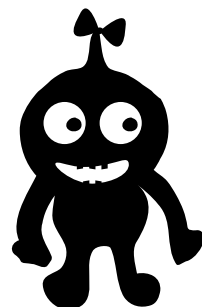
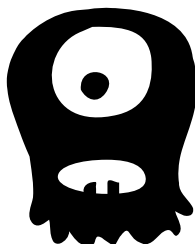
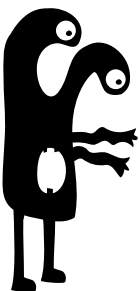
If I were a missile, I'd descend so far into the ground,
you'd implode, explode and shout.

If I were darkness, I'd shadow the light and cause a blackout.

If I were brilliant, I would have a bright idea for everything.
If I were a rattlesnake, I'd shoot green venom
from my fangs and make your skin bleed and sting.

If I were the Earth's crust, I'd smash you down,
you'd fall underground;
you would be lost, and never found.

Jahir Gray





Naiya King

A New Calendar

Every single day is a holiday
and you can't see yourself
because you're invisible.
But somebody ruins the day by fighting
Cars crashing everywhere—chaos,
like a tornado churning the trees into circles
on the outskirts of the day off.

James Stewart

Unknown

It is unknown that karma comes with a price,
with an identity confidential, how else could it be nice?
Let it be known to the unknown:
I may not be grown,
but with a conscience of 100% toughness,
you will feel the pain while you groan.

Let it be known: 100% on trend,
0% condescend;
0% engaged,
replaced with 100% rage.
A combination of more than three,
it is a mystery.
A condescending attitude tells you
what it is to me.

While you are prissy and pretentious,
I'm standing tall with the ruggedness
As you are agile and malicious,
I stand above all, courageous and vicious.

Forget the pain and anarchy—
Why?
Because it's unknown by me.

Jayden Gray



Feel my pain

Feel my pain, stuck in the game
Trying to play it different ways
But the results always the same;
Being stereotyped by what's on paper
Before I get to speak.

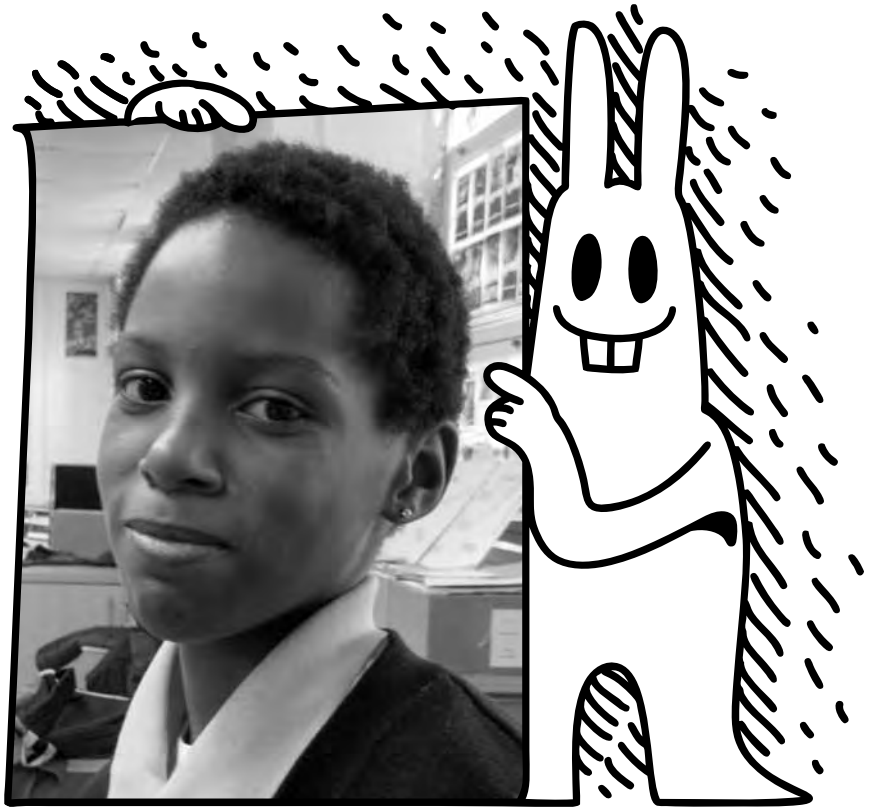
Employers scared to look in my eyes
because they might get weak
and see that I am striving
and searching for a better life,
so they hold their heads down
and read my background
and always think twice.

What am I to do with three mouths
to feed—turn back to what I was
raised around, and then I'll be
considered wrong for the
many lives I jeopardized?

No one sees the struggle—they only see
the trouble.

Now I'm labeled a menace to society and all
my charges are doubled—everyone in the
world is different, but our struggles
are all the same, so I know there are
many different ways to
feel my pain

Demarco Tucker



Isyah Joyner

The Night Is Bright

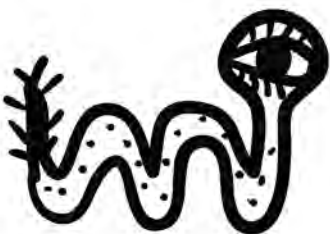
Every night the light is like a sea breeze
shining into the sky on a full moon.

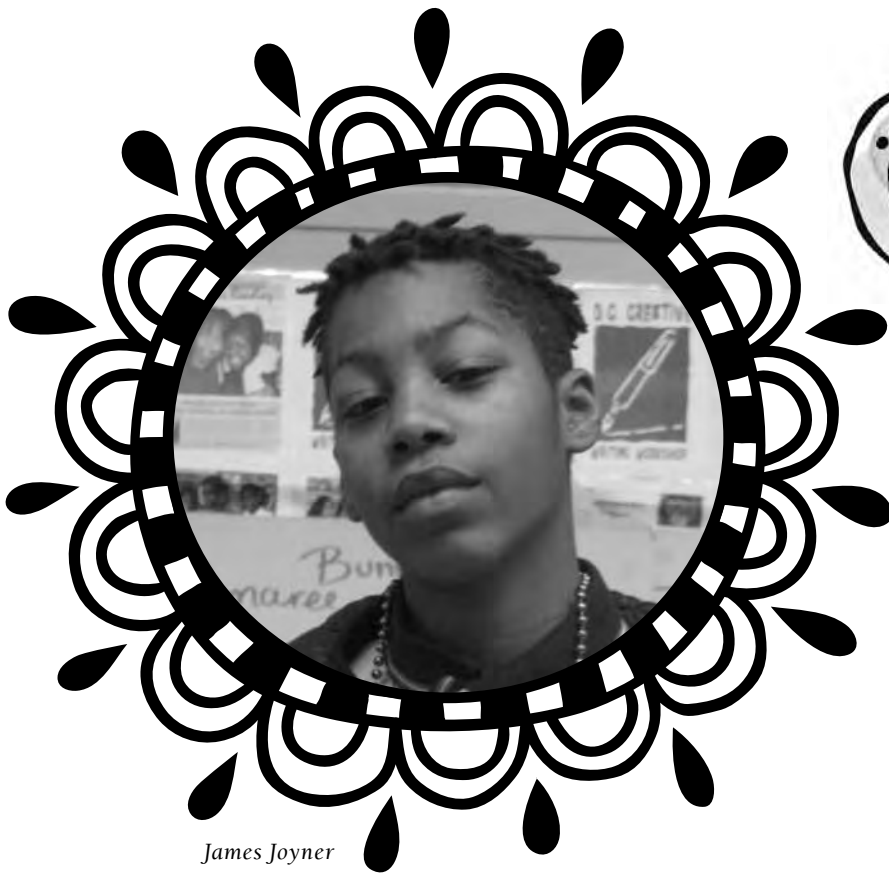
The brilliant idea of it
feels like a surprise
burst into the bright light,
flying like a kite.

The light that makes a harp turn gold
is a blossom in a rainbow.

The night is bright, like ice skating on light.

Vincent Wingfield





James Joyner



Happily ever after

Camouflage purple dog skipping down
the glowing house steps to welcome
the happy new-born baby, silently.
The amazed sky-blue parents
embrace the flow and
the family lives happily ever after.

Tamia Moyd

Racing Into a New Year

I am racing into a new year
with exciting, positive days to come, and
all my old memories skate
slowly in my dreams
which were easy to let go.
I am smiling silently into the new year
breathing deeply, waiting for my birthday.

Tamia Moyd



The Eater of Worlds

If I was a scream, I would give people brain freeze.
If I were venom, I would poison you.
Get down on your knees, please.

If I were the grim reaper,
I would send people underground
to the underworld of death.
If I were hate, you would be shredded
for car theft, left like MacBeth.

If I were fake, I would never be real.
If I were agreement, there would be no deal.
If I were nothingness, I'd still be fed.
If I were alive, you would all be dead.
And for Halloween...
Nothing will ever be said.

Jayden Gray



*l-r: Isyah Joyner, Armani Thornton, Micheal Thornton,
Trevonne Joyner, James Joyner, Omarion Butler*

The Hate Homework Poem

My homework hates you
the math hates you
the algebra hates you
the hard-working integers hate you

The challenging, but fair, extra curriculum hates you

Even the Education of Life hates you

The unpleasant and evil demon that haunts the school hates you

The tranquility of a man that was
turned into a werewolf
by moonlight hates you,
which is awful.

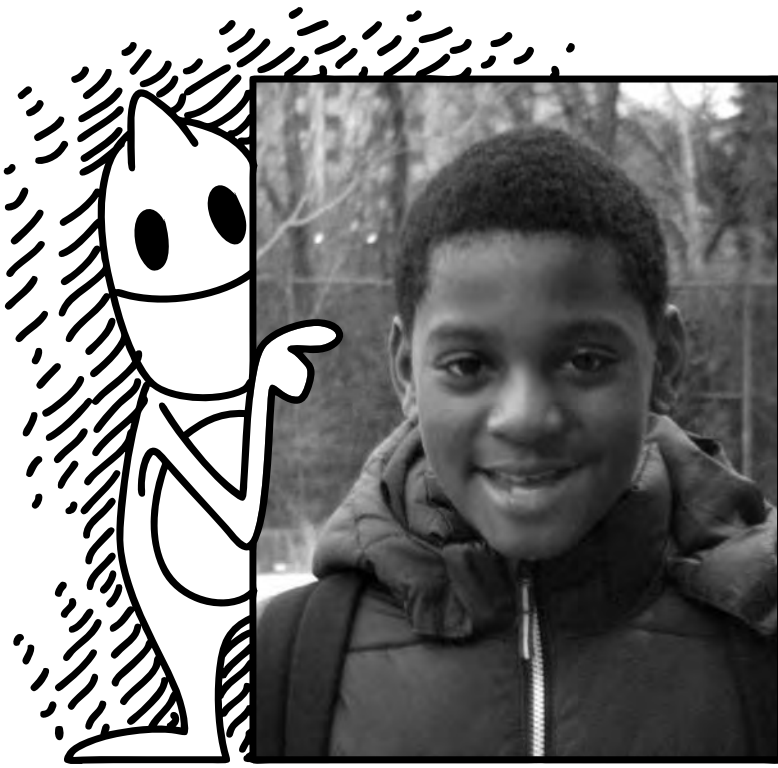
Vincent Wingfield

Dark Energy

I think about darkness
and breeze before I go to sleep
I also think about softness in bed
I think about energy, too
I even look outside before I close my eyes
then I think about brightness
I think about sliding off the bed!

Akeera Jackson





Ernest McBride

The Winning New Year

I am winning into the new year.
The old years have been forgotten
like the moon
like the dawn of the new day.

It will be hard to let go of
the tangy taste of sweet chili,
but I am winning, and leaving
junk food behind and
my pride is unbroken.

Elijah Hamilton-Todd

Fly

I fly so high the angels can't even touch me
I'm so hot I'm sweating like herbal tea
In the winter time, reciting what I heard
When I go outside, I'm so cold I look like a frozen bird
My poem is lit—it's like fire
Knowing no one can surpass me, because I'm higher
I'm so cool everybody likes me
So cool that nobody wants to fight
Closing this poem, because poetry's my life
My skills are so sharp I'm like a pocket knife

Jailyn Smith

Universe

Hear ye, hear ye:
This is Shakespeare's universe.
Go. Beat it, evil,
so the dark lord can break his skull,
and be sacred, too, a precious enhancement of nature.
The garden of determination is about nationality and loyalty.
The Milky Way galaxy is a Neverland.

Vincent Wingfield



IDK

I don't know where to start
I don't know what to say
But man, oh man—
The flame of stress burns my brain.
These faceless expressions; I'm so tired
I am strained; I don't know why this
had to be—staring at the broken light
bulb in the street—I am confused but
Try to understand, this isn't me—I hate expressing
myself. Why are you so worried about my
shattered glass wisdom?

Demarco Tucker

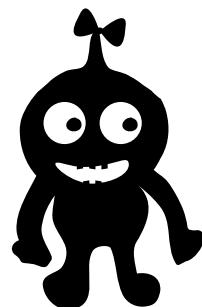
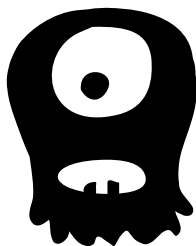
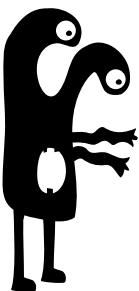


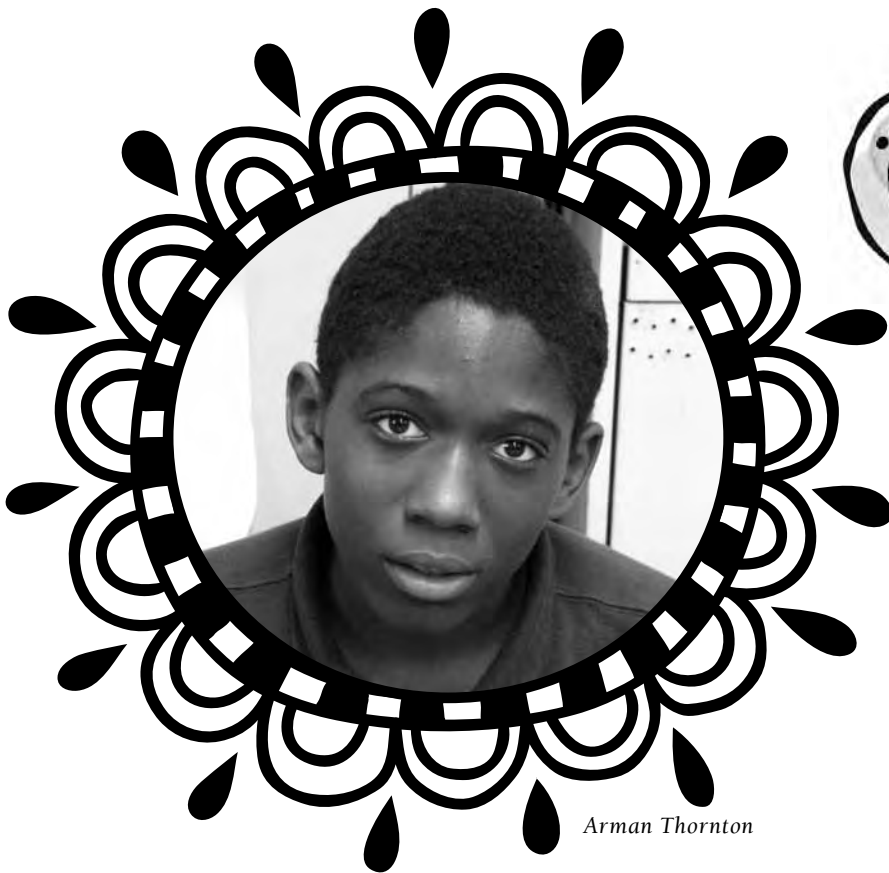
Trevonne Joyner

Nothing but love

Let it be love that I have for my writing club family
When we do our poems, I ball out like Carmelo Anthony
Let it be hope—hope that I can have all day
Caught up in the mist, there's nothing else I can say
Let it be anger, fear, sadness—to me it's all a myth
Let this poem be history, let it be in the greatest books
Now let me end this poem, because I'm hungry like a wolf

Jailyn Smith





Arman Thornton

I am popping into the new year

I am dancing into the new year
 I am winning into the new year
 I am moonwalking into the new year
 I am burning into the new year
 I am flowing into the new year
 I am leaning into the new year
 I am gliding into the new year
 I am fading into the new year
 and finally, it's the end of the night,
 and now I'm sleeping
 and smiling out of the new year.

Akeera Jackson



Stop That!

Get up, you fool!
 It's a Tyrannosaurus rex
 with sinister eyes
 that make you want to be invisible.
 Your deepest fear
 the fastest—
 Get off me!

Samuel Hauser

My Yes Day with my Sister

One single hot steamy day—
 My Yes day
 would be at the pool, listening to my favorite artist, Cardi B,
 music blasting with my sister
 wearing my flowering dress.

We walk to the unbroken non-chaos playground
 later going home to my famous hotdogs
 with white bread and ketchup,
 and chicken patties with a cascade of a ranch.

Going to school wearing pure pink
 with invisible homework:
 This is my Yes day!

Tamia Moyd



*l-r: Isyah Joyner,
Omarion Butler*

I'm peeking into a new year

Shy, because I'm not sure how things go
slithering through the nights
tiptoeing all day long
smiling...
at my mom, my cat, and my family...
They remind me of the previous year,
they remind me of good days.

I'd rather sleep now and wait on the year
waiting for new technology,
new ideas.
It will make life easier and bring me joy—
Bouncing on my bed in joy
dancing and popping to the music-kind of joy
sliding down the park slide-type of joy
and then it will be 2019.

Marcus Hill

Mr. D's Difference

I know the websites that make people
somersault,
that bring excitement to life!
Mr. D's websites? Dull.
Exhausting. Just different.

I know trouble personally.
We are on a name-to-name basis.
We are magnetic, you could say.
Mr. D hangs out with the truth.
He's steady and always will be.

I live for the impossible,
for dreams not dreamt.
Mr. D only seeks possibility.
He lives in tall walls, alone.

Marcus Hill





Armani Thornton

Who is a poet?

A poet is someone
 who stays in the basement
 with the fireplace lit
 thinking of some solution
 to get out of a flooded house
 with a blanket over his head.
 He takes off his eyelashes
 turning him into ashes that causes his death,
 and a poet is somebody who
 spits bars of thunder
 that cause darkness
 in the air.

Gregory Nickens

The problem of how I go to sleep

My bed is smooth.
 My eyes are closed in the blue-black room.
 (The room is red in the morning.)
 In the darkness, I hear my father opening the fridge.
 I feel the moonlight making me calm and refreshed.
 I'm sliding off to sleep.
 When I'm in a dream, I see glowing lights.

Steven Brown



The Best Day

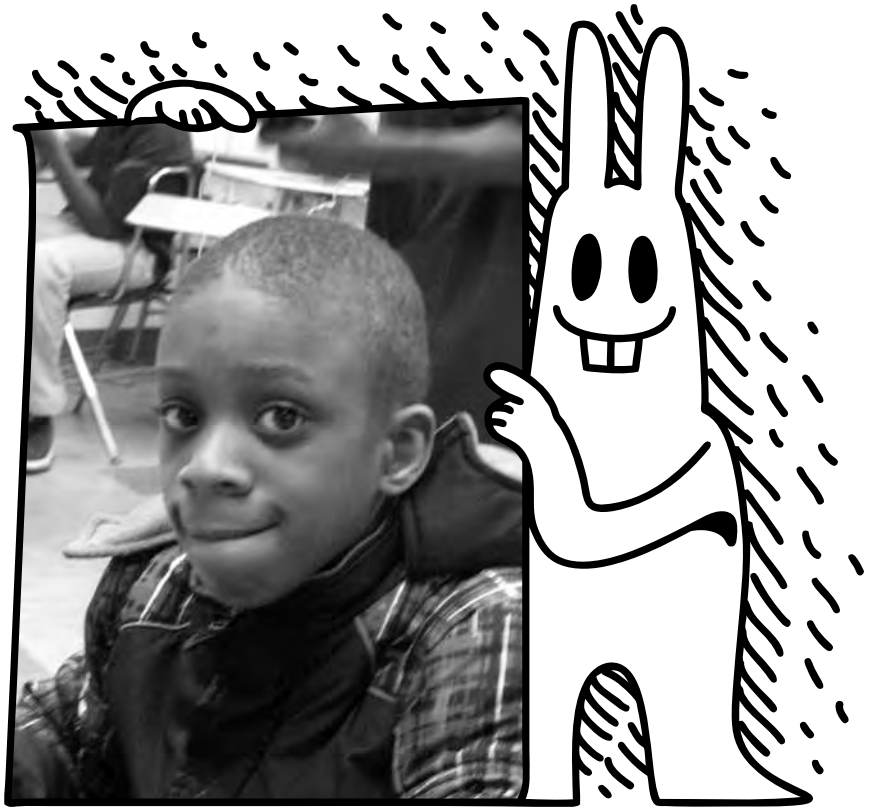
The sky is playing Cardi B
 and the music makes me want to sing!
 All my homework is defeated, I am the conqueror,
 and my happiness is unbroken!
 In my skull are thoughts of summer,
 leaves are branching out of the trees
 and the clouds are invisible!

Danai Corbin

Listen!

The house my sister built
from Legos
is broken
and the night is a deep dark cavern
filled with the voice of Mr. D
giving me lots of homework
and sailing me
down the river of knowledge.

Danai Corbin



Micheal Thornton

Pressure

I am heavier than a feather
A mystery is bigger than history
My heartbeat races to the finish line, where
I was dancing, in Hart Middle School.

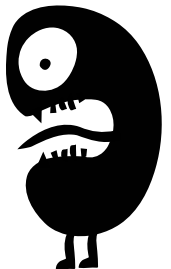
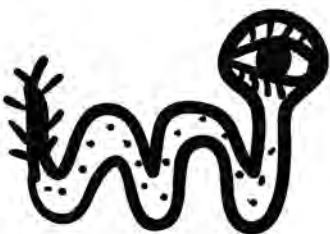
Nightmares in August
Dreams all the time
Marcus calls me Secret
because I never howl
Silk is the feeling of water.

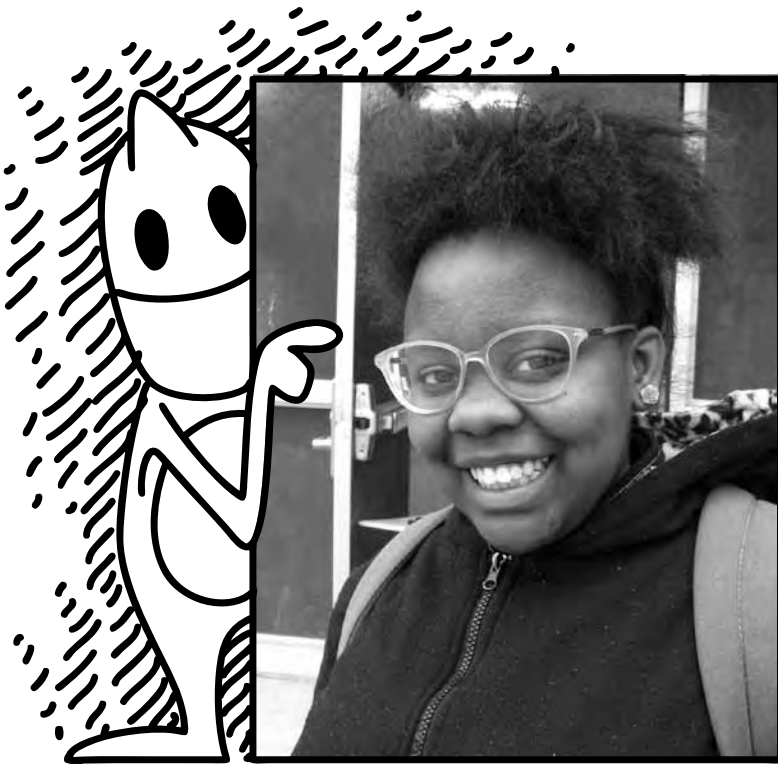
Amari Knott

The Clown

Razor-sharp teeth, he bites his victims on their neck,
invisibly white face, unseen beneath the piercing white paint
deeply red hair, the color of blood
carves through his head.
Dots by the hundreds all over the nervously white suit,
like holes—
deep, black, hollow, vicious.
Dark blue shoes, like two bruises,
gnashing the evil night's fear
into small children.

Danai Corbin





Nadaisha Wingfield

Lullaby

Just as I'm falling asleep
I look at the sky
I watch the smooth clouds
and how they look almost slippery
against the blue black sky

I think about the moon
Does it smell like pepperoni pizza
and cupcakes?
I can sometimes smell
the sweet fragrance
after I feel my eyes
sliding into the darkness
of a good night's rest

Brandon Gatling

Biceps

My biceps are stronger than one hundred men;
They're overflowing with blood for over ten.
They conquer weights like mountains.
Without them, how could I eat?
My arms are better than my feet.

My arms are strong, like knuckles.
Unlike Kevin Hart, I don't chuckle.
I'm fast like Flash, with no disruption—
I'm chaos without corruption.

Blake Mathews

All my names

I go by many names:
To my mom, I go by Secret, and Private
because I am shy.
To my brother, my name is Trumpet
and Never Listen,
because I yell at him;
I am Nightmare to him.
Mr. D, my teacher, he calls me Laughter
because it echoes in the hallway
and he calls me Eyes in class,
because I'm always looking.
My friend, Erica, smiles as she calls me Gladness,
but it is nighttime that knows me as Midnight
when it should be Asleep.

Danai Corbin



New Year

I am tiptoeing
into the new year.
The old years are old
like the cold, like silver.

Brandon Gatling



Trevonne Joyner

Celebrate

I am an evil dark lord
Arman is a traitor.
He went to the Neverland
and did nothing to try and stop me
from world domination,
but I have an enhancement
to stop my plans
and see the raindrops.

Amir Green

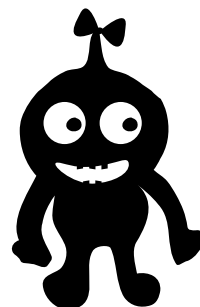
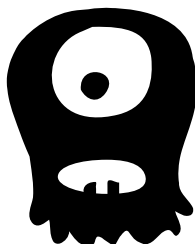
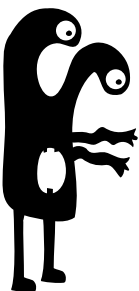
The Color Blue Surprised My Day

The slime isn't blue until the dye marinates it
Your shirt isn't blue until it is made for you
My life is blue because the sky is blue
My life is blue because you love me too

My father is sky blue because my mom is royal blue
My room is blue, but one side of blue
is the color of my heart, cause my cells are not
just red, no they're not, they're blue too

When I get compliments, some of them make me blue
but I sure don't know about you
Guess what? The jail's got a sale
on royal blue, sky blue, turquoise blue
waiting right for you

Jamaree Martin



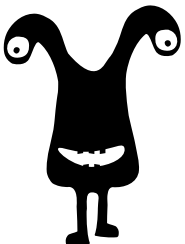


Erica Bell

Unafraid

I'm flowing, like
I'm gliding into New Year's.
I'm tiptoeing
like I'm dancing.
When I was 8
I was scared of gunshots;
Now I am 11 and
I'm not scared of gunshots.

Phillip Williams



My Back and Bones

I wouldn't be able to walk
without my back
because it is attached to my legs.

If I didn't have a backbone
or any bones
I would be like a pile of slime
and I couldn't move or eat.
I would just have to sit there on the floor
and people like Arman and Armani
might kick me.

Amir Green

A Poet in my Eyes

A poet in my eyes is a person
who writes her feelings and opinions
in one small—not even a paragraph.

A poet is a person who
wants everyone to know
what she has to say,
so she takes a writing utensil
and writes away,
covers the paper with ink.
It doesn't have to rhyme,
but that's a poet in my eyes.

Some poets write a tower of words so tall
it could take up two books.
A poem could be crisscrossed,
diagonal, sideways
as long as it makes sense.

McKia Bromfield



*l-r: Christa Madikaegbu,
Armani Thornton, Micheal Thornton*

Interesting Eli

Nae-Nae,
also known as Eli from Chicago:

You know her by the length of her black and red dreads
or the perfume from her pink bag.
Her laughter is like a wicked evil SpongeBob
but happy, like Teen Titans are.

You could've seen her rushing to tackle the quarterback
or doing a handstand without hands.
She loves to be around creative goofy fearless high schoolers
but like she always says,
"Man, I gotta leave!"
Ms. Nancy, Bunny not trying to let me leave"

Shanay Lesane

Searching Destiny

My lies are unspoken.
My Lemonheads are sky blue
like Easter eggs,
mysterious in blue glass.
My bones are hard, like
diamonds, rubies and emeralds.
My spirit is tropical,
like a sunny day at the beach
in a tender vision
of silent shadows.
I am a new legend—
I embrace my destiny!

Elijah Hamilton-Todd





Arman Thornton

Stressful things

Video games stress me out.
It's a challenge beating missions.
Teachers give me troubles
by giving me a lot of work and homework.
My friends are sometimes annoying,
just listening to their voices.
Football is stressful.
The blindness of some players is a mystery.

Tommy Fridie



Hating You?

I have a red case that had hate
a red comb that had hate
a green-black tie that hated my date
a green grape that hated my stomach ache

I hate you
I've got a bag with hate in it
I hate you no matter how much I eat cake
You're nothing but hate
My tooth had a hole, the dentist patched it up, and
even that hated you

I hate you the tip of an acorn
the sweetness of a cookie
that's baked as a cake
that really hated you

I really hate you
You're just the wrappers of candy I get for Halloween
that I ate, and the candy I hate
is an almond, not the one in the store,
the one that's baked, that hates you
I really hate when you try me
and tell me I am funny and laugh as
I really hate you

Jamaree Martin



*l-r: Elijah Hamilton-Todd,
James Stewart*

Synesthesia

A star sounds like a bell
 An animal's howl tastes just like chicken
 A circle smells like rubber
 Your smile sounds like cheese
 A baby's cry is bright, like blue

Phillip Williams

My Real Name

When I'm asleep, they call me Wake Up
 I always tell the truth
 What's unseen is my pain
 You can call me Water, because I make a splash
 When someone gets an award, that gives me gladness
 so call me Generous
 But my secrets are private.

Tommy Fridle

Rage

Let it be a gale hitting your house.
 Let it be a whirlwind destroying your neighborhood.
 Let it be a wildfire at your campsite.
 Let it be a blizzard, like a snowstorm.
 Let it be lightning, like a brainstorm.
 Let it be a comet falling from space.
 Let it be a saber-toothed cat killing your friend
 in the room, with the door locked.

Phillip Williams





Christian Woodall

D'hani

From Dubai to Hollywood to Wingate
the kid known as Mad Max
looks down over his kingdom
You know him by his sharp wit
and the V-8 rumble of his laughter
Rolling thru the halls,
his anger an unstoppable tank
He loves being a drummer
hanging in ATL in the summer
Good-strong-minded people,
He knows them well
But like he always says:
If you follow the wrong path
you'll end up dead or in jail.

Patrick Washington

Picasso

A man named Picasso was very dangerous.
The thing he was dangerous at was artwork.
The place the dangerous man wants to go
is Atlanta, aka ATL.
The reason he wants to go to Atlanta is because
of all of the beautiful women.
When Picasso gets mad
it's like a mountain causing an avalanche.

D'hani Rispus



Write About the Other Half

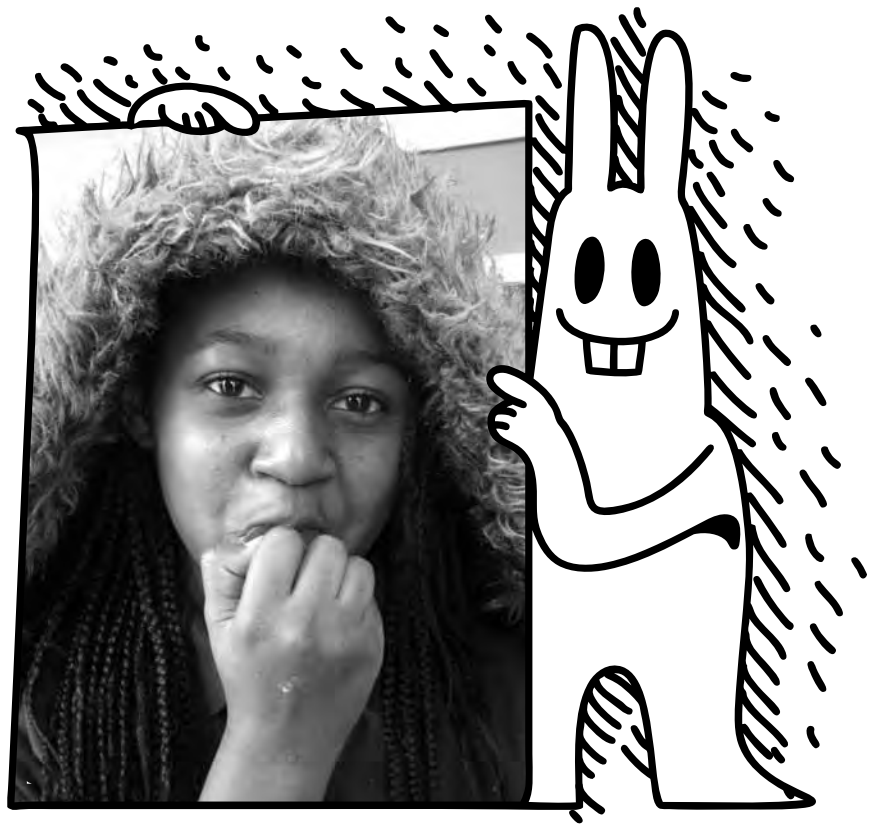
Headaches and struggles, feel like I've been
gripped by the devil
The fulfillment to bring you pleasure
is something I do extra
Childlike love is one thing you give the most
I was hunting for an angel
Guess I got what I'm looking for
Stumble down the street
and your wings caught my downfall
And if I get caught up in a jam
I hope you jam me out, dawg
Can't really do the surprise
that's why the missile stays out
It's an underground mission
just let me know if you're down
Sundial blossom that I found,
that's why I love to water you down

Khalil Jones

Trick Cycle

Bright sun
turned his back on the stars
so the moon came out at night
Something like betrayal
Just how you leave a piece of cheese
on a trap as if you're feeding a mouse
When you're tired of your company
and don't know how to ask 'em to leave

Akeera Jackson



Domination is a theater for traitors
they love evil nature
it's a beautiful neverland
Dark lord done turned raindrops to static and friction
Sounding like thunder had a problem
with the silent neighbor
Gambling with the traitor
Hope it all plays in your favor

Khalil Jones

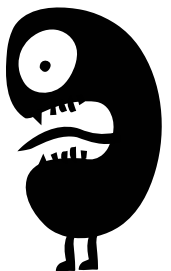
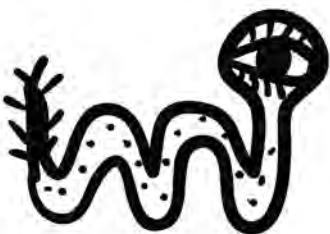
Nothingness

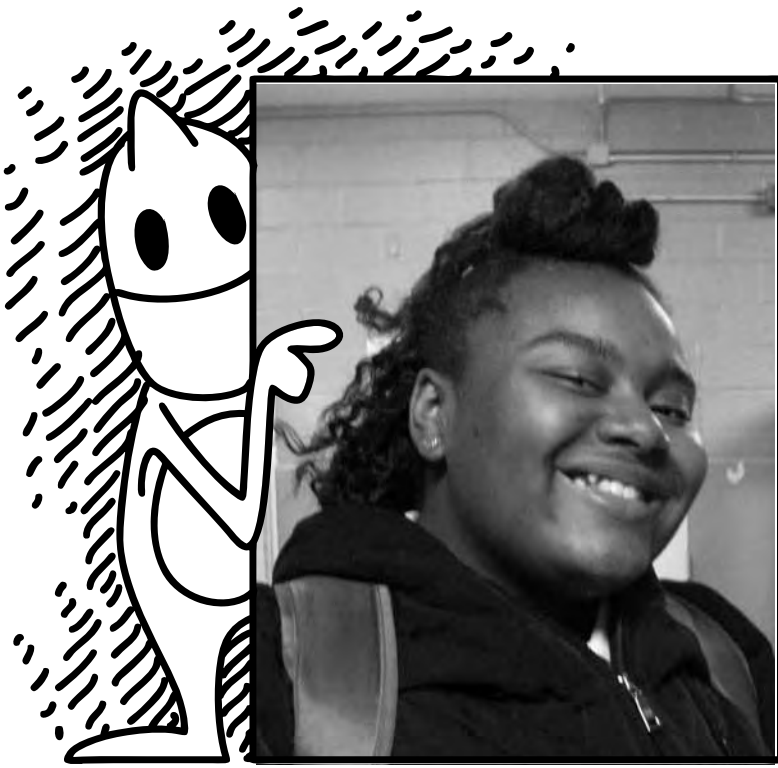
Sugar sweet tea
the morning is always so good to me
We're going upwards just to go downhill
something like a nothingness missile

I'm a fearful outburst
you can never know what hit 'cha
Catch me running through the sky
catching seabreeze, feeling like a kite

Judgment night, it's a shredded time
more like supper
Corn, chicken, biscuits and butter,
Brilliant idea for everyone to eat quick
and turn dinner to nothingness

Khalil Jones





Jewel Jones

Let it be

Let it be love
Let it be happy
Let it be Juniper pug
Let it be fun
Let it be friends
Let it be original
Let it be love for the dog
Let it be football
Let it be joyful
Let it be roses

Kamari King

First Language

Have you ever had fingers
that couldn't feel, but see everything you do?
Ever had fingers that can hit but never touch?
It's like owning a gun that won't bust
My fingers get so angry
all they like to do is fight and fuss
like parents deciding who will drive
and who will ride the bus
Dang, they're getting breathless
from the overflowing tension
of the unknown presence
of the eyes I never mention

Khalil Jones

Hyperbole

The movie was so scary
my hair ran off my head screaming
I'm so cool, in the summer
people stand near me for air
I'm so cool
I make yo mama drool
I'm so happy
I make you mad
I'm so cool
I make cool hot
That boy's so ugly
he makes white flowers turn purple

James Joyner



Dream Sequence

My TV is glowing
My flesh was underground
Behind the glass door
My flesh was happy
My mom, newborn

Christian Woodall



Marcus Hill

True Names

My real name is Victory
Yesterday, my name was Wisdom
Tomorrow, my name will be Memory
My friends think my name is Listen
My parents think my name is Sunlight

Keyshon Johnson

No Fear

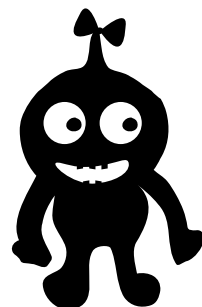
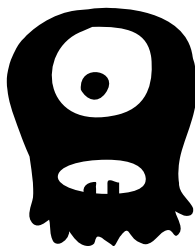
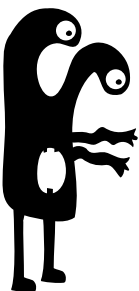
Evil clowns don't scare me
with their creepy eyes.
No nighttime creature
scares me
in the dark.
No, not at all.

Keyshon Johnson

I Imagine Old People

Yesterday, I went to my house.
Old people
forget what they promise;
My mom
forgot my birthday,
but there was excitement.
I'm going in the house.
My mom is exhausting.
When she gets home
I'm in trouble.

Christian Woodall





Armani Thornton

How I Feel

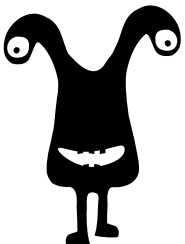
A star sounds like a whale singing
A circle smells like apple juice
White moves in, in a flash
A whisper looks like a silent butterfly
The texture of purple feels weird
The letter A glows the color green
Whenever I look at you, I hear you're ugly
An animal's howl tastes like chicken

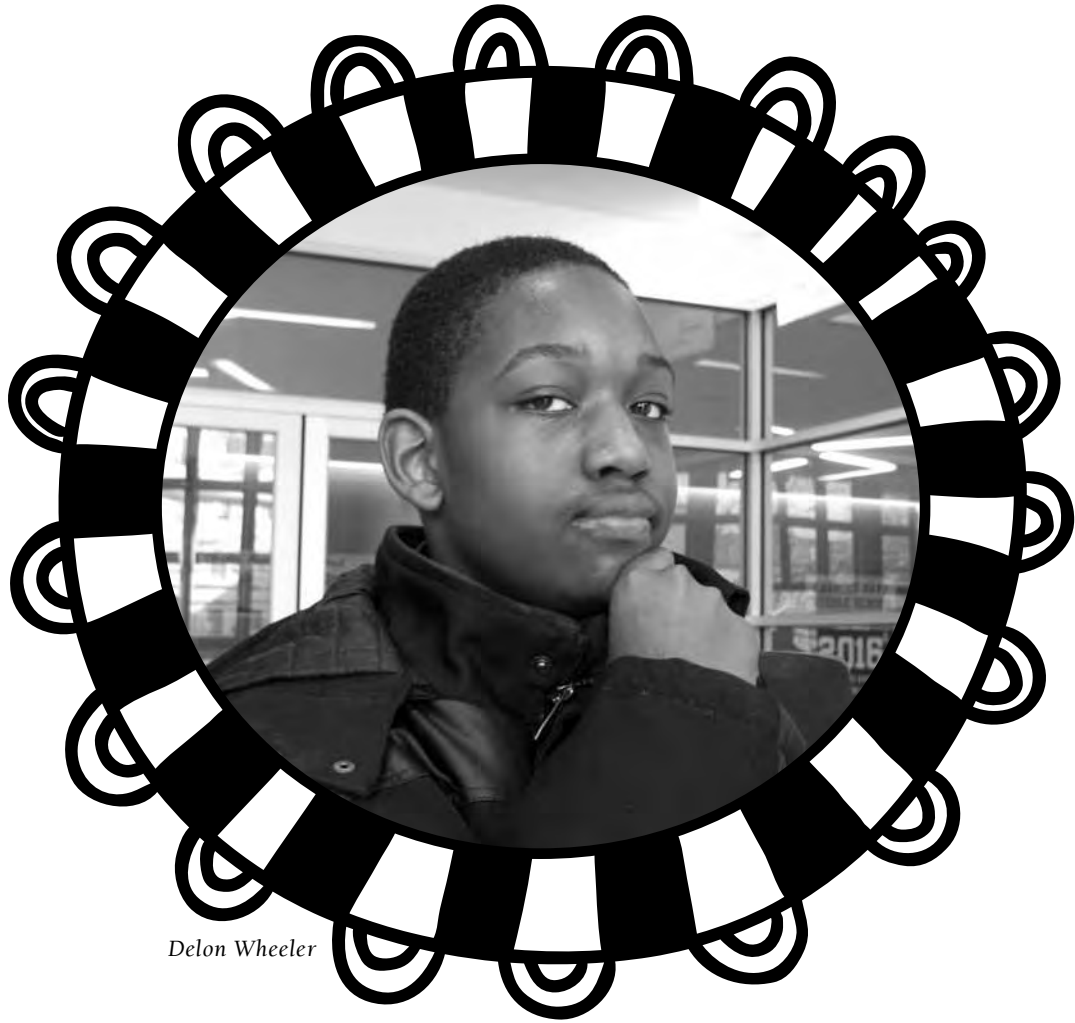
Micheal Thornton

Before the Poet Did Magic

Being a poet ain't easy—finding words is like
cutting trees from off a road—I'm telling you now
this being a poet can get tricky
Writing a poem can sometimes feel like
talking to a cow—as the cow says,
“moo moo moo” he says what he sees.
A poet can easily have a journal full of poems
but I have to think twice because a good poet,
they have to write a lot and that's one thing I
cannot do—Picking just one word is like picking
just one apple from an apple tree and having just one choice
and just one choice can be like walking through danger
and danger I walk in can change me but
not like a stranger

Jamaree Martin





Delon Wheeler

What Is a Poet?

One day everything felt ice cold, like a blizzard
and the poet felt like a prisoner.

A poet is a 6th grader with a bloody pen
that whispers to a prisoner.

A poet is someone who jumps, does flips
and flips upside down.

A poet is someone who jumps with a parachute;

A poet is someone who jumps without a parachute.

Leroy Bailey III

I Hate You

I hate you truly
I hate the yellow shirt that you wear
I hate the shoes that you're wearing
I hate the pants that you're wearing
I hate your whole outfit
I hate you until dawn

Micheal Thornton





Vincent Wingfield

Sense

A star sounds like a cramp
 A circle smells like death
 White moves in a home
 A whisper looks like a cloudy day
 The texture of purple feels like
 lavender flowers
 The smell of love is good like candy

Kitana Williams

Hands

You can help people with your hands
 The possibilities with your hands are
 Endless
 You can make a statue with your hands
 You can steal money from the bank or
 Make the winning shot with your hands
 You can shoot somebody with your hands
 You can do almost anything with your hands
 You can eat fried chicken, and
 you can pick the winning lottery number
 with your hands

Micheal Thornton



Why am I Here?

Should I be in this world? I just wanna know
 Why am I here?
 What will the future hold?
 I could have been an animal
 I could have been an alien
 I just wanna know—why am I here?
 Why didn't humans go extinct yet,
 but I feel like I'm the only one here?
 I just wanna know why I'm here
 I'm still surviving
 watching other humans
 going extinct and wondering
 Why am I here?

Micheal Thornton



*l-r: Micheal Thornton, Isyah Joyner,
Vincent Wingfield, Omarion Butler*

My Story

I come from NYC
 I make my home peaceful, like the sound
 of ocean waves
 I see thirsty flames and I wonder will they ever die
 When I am alone, I think to myself if I am worth it
 I imagine that I can do great in life and inspire others
 Every day, I see people crumbling my trust
 but if I look closely, I see
 everlasting love by my side
 A voice inside me says "Keep going"
 and I want to tell the world
 to never give up
 Right now I am softness
 but someday I will see nothingness
 I wish to have a hurricane of money

Kitana Williams

Who Is a Poet

A poet is someone who writes words of wisdom
 that disguise failure
 His words are a weapon and his audience
 are his opponents
 A poet looks fear in the eye and makes it scared
 A poet is someone who changes lives
 through speaking
 A poet expresses his emotions through speaking
 A poet is me

Kitana Williams





Isyah Joyner

New Year

I'm flying into the New Year
while the old years are racing back
flowing through the air like nothingness
my mind dancing around like a ballerina
starving for motivation
skating for greatness in this year
but also fighting myself
out of the old year

Kitana Williams



Anger turns to love

Let it be anger
Let it be sleet
Let it be defiance
Let it be jalapeño
Let it be blizzard
Let it be death's head
Let it be a shark-toothed dolphin
Let it be a saber-toothed cat
Let it be lightning
Let it be thunder
Let it be brick
Let it be curry
Let it be four-tusked elephant
Let it be a bone-crushing dog
Let it be fear
Let it be love

Kitana Williams

Lips

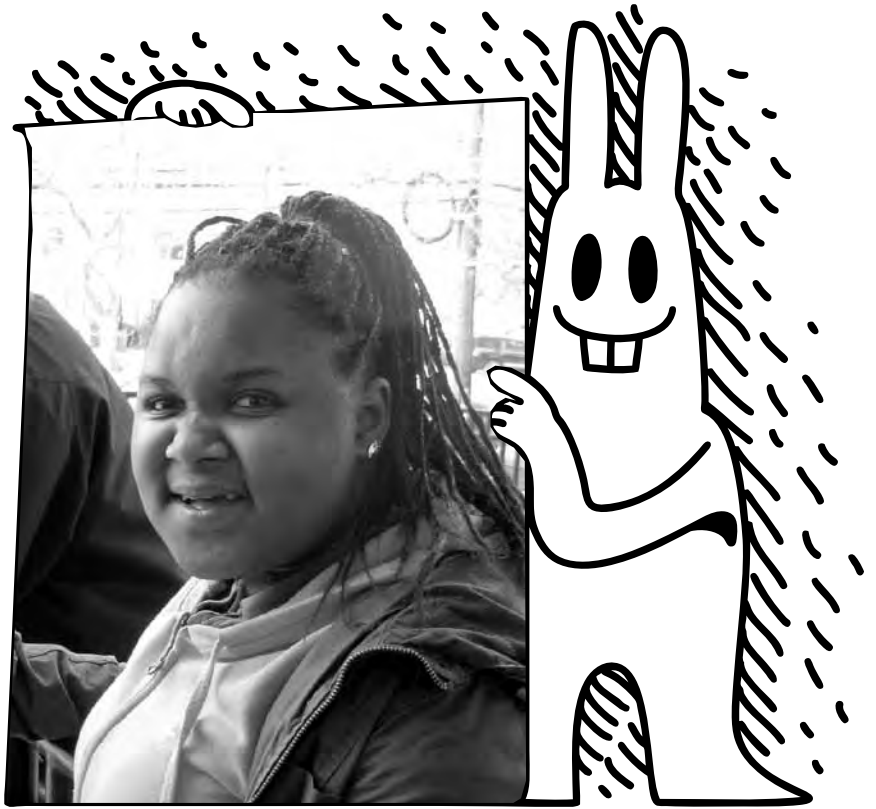
Have you ever had lips that could not taste?
You feel like the world is going nowhere
You have luxury lips
Your lips have a smooth way of speaking
You have lips like the full moon

Kitana Williams

Love

Love is good
Love is so wonderful
Love is bad & sometimes love can
be dangerous
but love is for me
Love can take a lot
Love is a precious thing
Love is a skill
Love is something, but people
say it is nothing

Kitana Williams

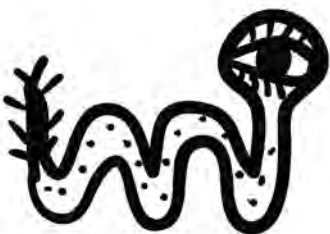


Tamia Moyd

I'm So Cool

I'm so cool I walk down the hall and
the girls fall out.
I'm so cool I walk on water, like Jesus,
because it turns to ice.
I'm so cool that when I smile
they give me the White House.
I'm so cool they threw Donald Trump out
just so I could move in.
I'm so cool that I froze the universe .

Ernest McBride



Psyche, LOL!

You are so cute! Psyche!
I'm nice, but you have to be a good friend.
My enemies are so nice
that I throw up in my mouth.
I try to be nice to all, but if you are mean to me
you can appear in a pit of lava—but I'm very nice.
If you mess with my family, you aren't a friend.
I can deceive and torture you.
I like making new friends,
but if you mess with Ms. Nancy,
you are a friend on fire.
Now you really are ugly.

Armani Thornton





Brandon Gatling

I Hate You

Head to toe, I
hate you at first
The blue gumball that
I had was beautiful and now
it looks terrible, like you
Oh my god—what is that
on it?
Oh, it's just your face
By the way, I saw a dead dog
and it reminded me of you

Armani Thornton

Striving into a New Year

Most girls work hard
So hard we are unstoppable
Some girls skip class & get "F's"
They're very stoppable
Some girls like fighting and falling
down like the grading chart
Some girls are crashing & hitting walls
Right now I need a miracle
Dancing & singing to songs
throughout the halls
Most girls are flying and storming
through the walls trying to get to class
My year has been crazy—how about yours?

Armani Thornton

The Story of My Life

I come from the inside of your wildest dreams
I make my home at the bottom of the ocean
where your soul lies—I see cotton candy
eyes in front of me and I wonder if sharks
feast on your body. When I am alone, I
poison the heartbeat of my enemies
I imagine that I am a majestic twilight flame
Every day I see a calm soul on the hazy mountain
but if I look closely I can see the moonlight
in your eyes—A voice inside me says to find
inspiration in your photo, and I want to tell
the world nothing is powerful in my eyes
Right now I'm wondering if what I'm saying is
helpful, but someday I will remember all of the
good things that happened in my life
I wish I could live forever, but now it's time to
say, "Adios!"

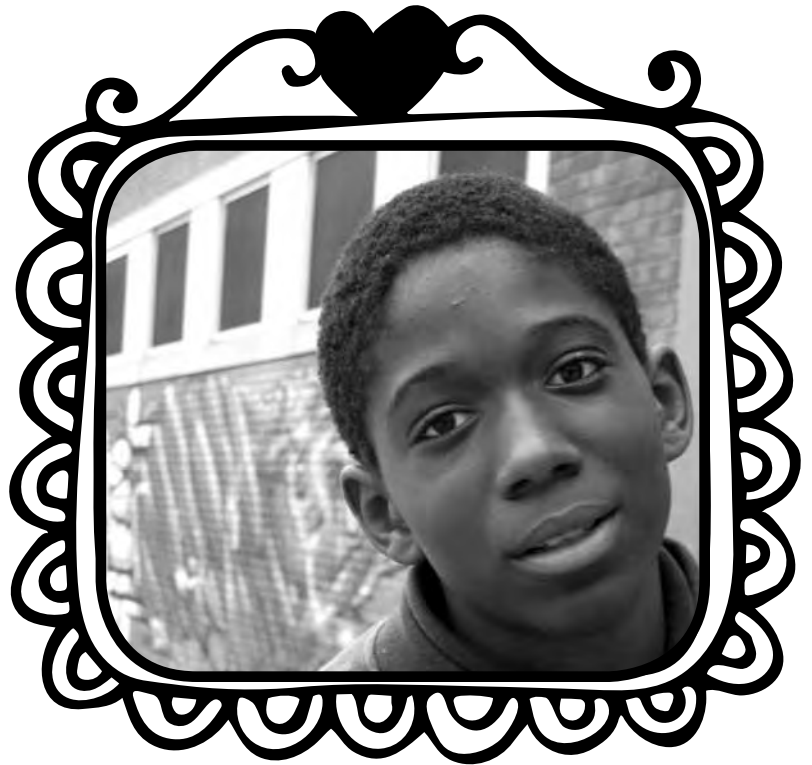
Armani Thornton



Red

I am red and you need me.
You need me so you can stop.
I don't like myself sometimes,
but I don't like you, too.

Kitana Williams



Arman Thornton

Earth

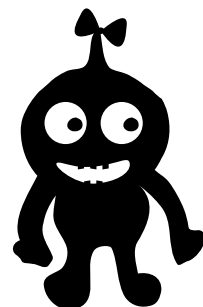
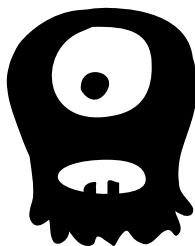
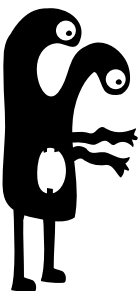
If I were a flower, I'd want to go and get some food
and have fun and become a human
I will be the earth binder because I'm in the earth
When it's time to grow—I've become beautiful
They pick me whenever they want to and they
don't ask for permission—They don't know how
to take care of me properly—I hate it when these
humans hurt me and my relatives—OMG blossom
season is near—Why are they calling a... florist?
I think that's what they called it
Darkness tries to take me, but like a person I've got
to fight for my will and what is right—
That's the end of my life—it is winter
Good bye, harsh world

Armani Thornton

Loyalty

I am loyal to my friends and determined
to tell Christa to do her work
When she says no, my other side
as the Dark Lord comes out
Love is cool, but dangerous
You see those stains?
Those are from the blood of enemies
I crush the skulls of the foolish
Now do your work!

Armani Thornton





Booker T. Whitaker

Meowsie

My BFF, aka Christa's favorite place to be
Is home, just like me
I know her by the way she talks in the 3rd
person—her laughter is like a fierce tiger
but when she cries it sounds like a kitten
and I hate it when she cries
My favorite thing about Meowsie is that we
grew up together
My BFF's are the best people to hang around.

Armani Thornton

Synesthesia Poem

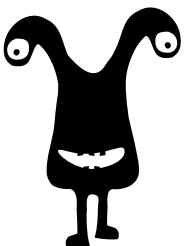
A star sounds like a waxed floor that has been stepped on
A dog's howl tastes just like cinnamon buns
Your smile sounds like heaven's gate opening
A new idea feels like victory

Armani Thornton

Who Is a Poet?

A poet is a person who sits and writes all day,
versus a regular person who sits and does nothing.
A poet is a person who sits and thinks
for hours and hours.
A poet is a person who takes advantage
of the warmth, versus a person who hates writing.
A poet builds words like a tower
and makes it seem so easy.
A poet makes words that are powerful and bold.

Armani Thornton





Vincent Wingfield

Shoes

I would be a pair of shoes because people
would be waiting in line for me.
People would treat me like I am important
but I would be in so much pain from the thought
of people stepping on me & tripping on me
spitting on me and I would smell like things
that I didn't want to smell like.
I would be judged a lot of times, like I
did something wrong.
All I did was keep your feet warm
and keep them from hurting—
That's why you should hear me because
I am shoes.

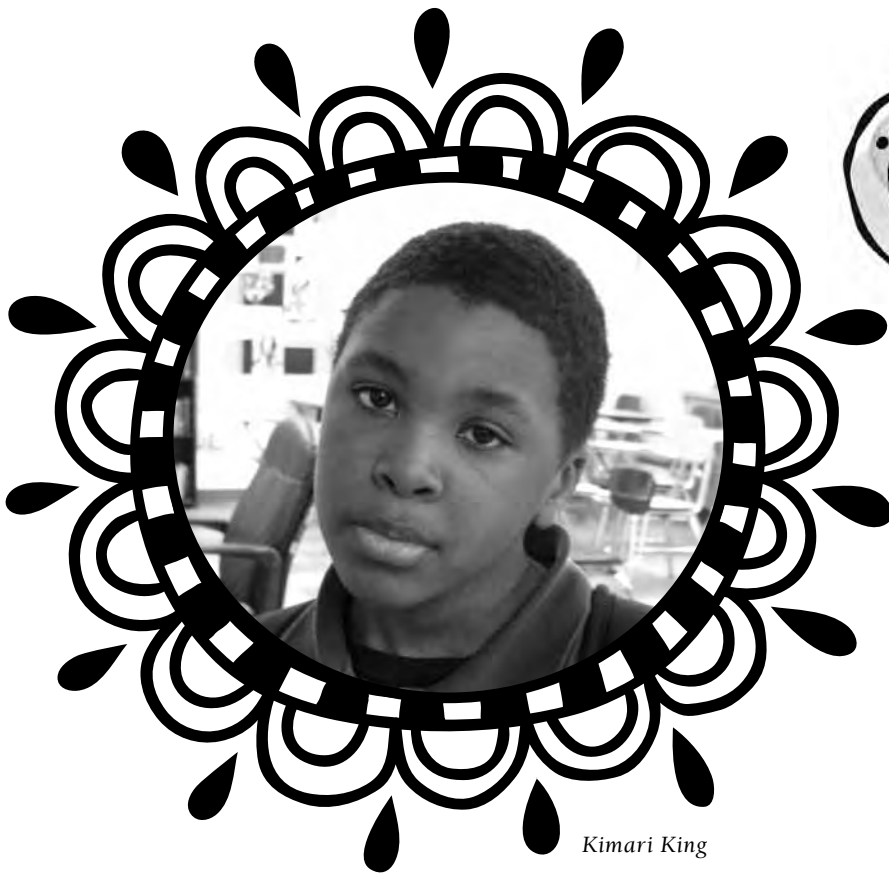
Na'jee Ferguson

Mixed Up

A star sounds like bells
A circle smells like rubber
A baby's cry is bright blue
A new idea feels like a million dollars
Whenever I look at you, I hear whispers
An animal's howl tastes just like chicken
Your smile sounds like a cash register

Roosevelt Willis





Kimari King

Cool

How cool am I?
 I'm so cool when it's summer
 I make it seem hot
 and the hottest day I ever made
 well, I really didn't because I'm so cool.
 I'm so cool when I walk outside I make
 the sun hide.
 I'm so cool that when it snows, I make
 the snowflakes all look the same.
 I'm so cool when I watch a scary movie
 I make the movie look scared.

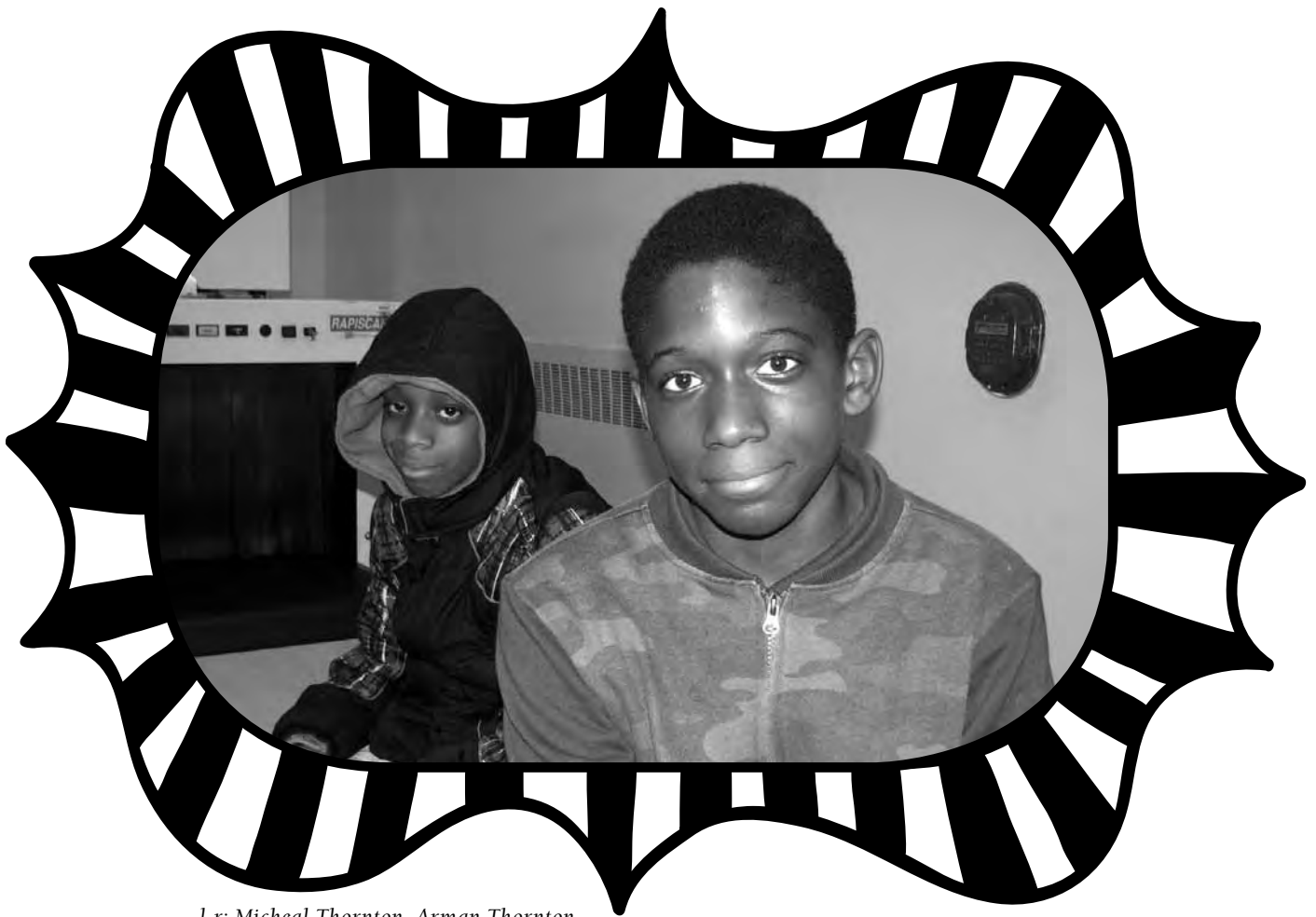
Na'jee Ferguson



No Longer

I'm enchanted.
 Awake in no color, just covered in evil.
 The worst misery took over, becoming
 a dark lord with a hold on domination
 leaving nothing by my side.
 All the hopes and dreams killed off—
 they got drunk with loyalty;
 The eyes inside me from before,
 now destroyed without mercy.
 Tried to warn them about what's happening
 but I forgot when they abandoned me.
 Led to a sacred place that used to be sweet—
 Now it just holds toxic memories.
 Trapped in a garden with no way to be free.;
 Don't wanna turn into a demon
 Won't you please save me?

Christa Madikaegbu



l-r: Micheal Thornton, Arman Thornton

Eyes

Eyes. The window to the soul
 the door to my soul, the key to my soul
 the gift to my soul, blue-green hidden under
 rotten brown, blind without glasses;
 Visualize through sound.
 Eyes. My way to remember
 without having to think
 They could replace the rest of me automatically
 Eyes could make them see
 without having to speak
 Eyes. Always hidden. Dark, yet shining
 with the heartbeat, becoming intimidating
 getting more menacing—I'm hurting slowly
 Who knew eyes could have such hostility?

Christa Madikaegbu

Synesthesia

A star sounds like a whisper in your ear.
 A circle smells like a freshly cooked pancake
 from the best of places.
 White moves in a slow movement of depreciation.
 A whisper looks like a shooting star.
 The texture of purple feels
 like smooth, but bumpy skin.
 The letter "K" glows the color red that
 reminds me of a special someone.
 Whenever I look at you I hear words that
 make me feel like I am something.

Na'jee Ferguson





Niko Brown

To be an angel

To be an angel, pure white and gold
 To fly so high the clouds are
 too far away to reach me
 To be an angel with holy wings
 made of grace
 To play a harp so heavenly
 in a one-girl orchestra
 To smile so brightly it's whiter than heaven
 But to fake an angel
 A traitor in a place of trust
 To fall faster than a meteor
 To be a fallen angel with black wings of
 Mystery
 To break a heart so hard it turns to dust
 To be a fallen angel weeping in sorrow
 To fall and crash so hard you end up in
 Middle earth

Christa Madikaegbu

The Girl in the Midnight Forest

A place she loves to visit. The place she runs off to
 A forest so beautiful it's illuminated in blue
 Below the cliff where the forest is
 lies a bottomless abyss
 She stands there waiting for no sudden reason
 She stands there longer in the fall season
 When the abyss starts to roar she is no more
 When the abyss turns red she is pronounced dead
 After her death the forest goes dark and black
 When it's easy to be attacked
 No one talks about her—no word to be said
 I know she will still be there haunting it again

Christa Madikaegbu



Wild

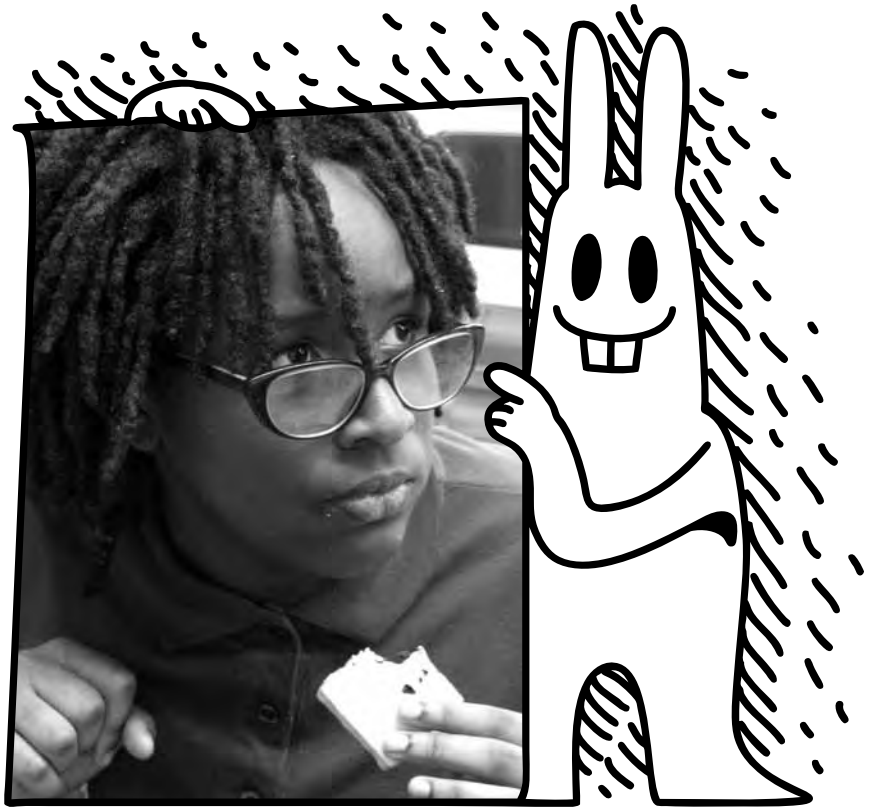
The movie was so scary it
Scared me to death and
Scared me back alive

My athlete
So glad he jellied
On two people at once

I'm so cool
When I walk past people
They freeze

It was so hot outside
When I looked at people they burned

Devin Peterson

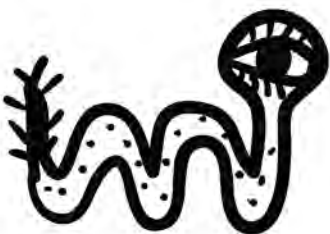


Christa Madikaegbu

Another

Another year I'm sleeping through
Another moment I'll remember soon
Another month until I forget my dreams
Another thought before it bursts at the seams
Another day the world turns while we sleep sound
Another time I don't care that the years pass round
Another hour until I lose my imagination
Another possibility when I might lose my passion
Another minute I start to regret
Another time of day I want to forget
Another second until I wake up
Maybe another life, but now my time is up

Christa Madikaegbu

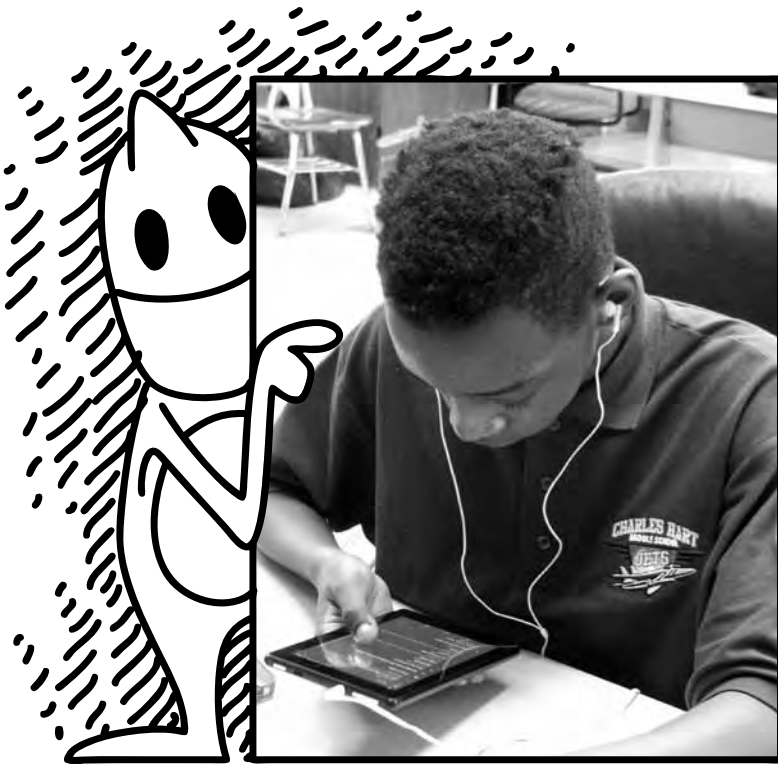


Too Synesthetic

The clouds sound like they're crying
Every time mother sky starts to roar
The tastes of smiles are filled with regret
regret so loud I can't hear myself speak
The whispers feel like
they're holding back screams
The sun tastes exciting, with a cold watery
taste, while the moon tastes bland with a
spicy hot aftertaste
The world around me feels locked away
but I feel locked inside the face I am
forced to hide

Christa Madikaegbu





Trevonne Joyner

Senses

A star sounds like pop-rocks
 A circle smells like orange peel
 White moves in a repeated cycle
 A whisper looks like paper falling
 Whenever I look at you, I hear quiet,
 Peacefully silent

Keily Cruz

An Apathetic Diagnosis of Love

To feel a certain yearning for attention
 while feeling admired just from smiles;
 A love so warming and welcome
 that could draw my attention, all I ever
 wanted lasted for years.
 A musical feeling, but
 a little crack in the romance left it
 falling apart, a glistening heart
 now painted in sorrow
 with a tint of numbness;
 A clear coat of agony mixed with the
 solid color of apathy, bleeding through
 the cracks of misery leaving behind
 a color called depression.

Christa Madikaegbu



The Horror Movie

The horror movie was so scary I died
 And it scared me back alive
 It was so scary my scream was heard
 All around the world
 It was so scary
 The killer was scared
 It was so scary
 I hid under the couch

Isyah Joyner

Mani, AKA Sleepyhead in her bed

She is known by her constant hunger.
 Her laughter is quiet but beautiful.
 She is full of smiles, but
 when she's angry she goes silent.
 When we argue, 2 seconds later
 we are laughing like crazy.
 She loves to be around us whenever she's bored
 and she knows her friends bring out the light in her.

Christa Madikaegbu

Slimy Year

I'm falling in to a new year
And I'll be eating chocolate
Crashing down the stairs
Flying into the air
Far away
Then playing with slime

DeAndre Williams

Beware the New Year

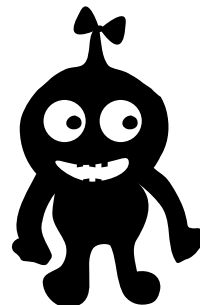
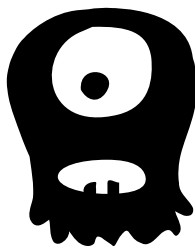
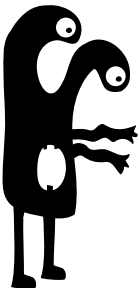
I am peeking into a new year
Leaning against the burning house
Over the racing ocean
I finally reach my destination
Dancing for my victory
Gliding through the air
Killing in the air
Everyone beware
The new year is here

Isyah Joyner

Confusion

A star sounds like fireworks.
White moves in a person running.
A whisper looks like man talking in your head.
A baby's cry is bright like a diamond.
A new idea feels like a light bulb.

Pierre' Washington



James Stewart

I Am an Artist

I have struggles
Sometimes I am very fearful
I have to go through judgment
and I feel brilliant
Sometimes I feel like dust and ashes
or an underground missile
Deep down in the darkness
I give people
Nourishment and care
Sometimes I lose my grip
And sometimes I have to make a sacrifice
But still I move upward
This is my life
I am
An artist

Isyah Joyner



Armani Thornton

How We Make a New Year

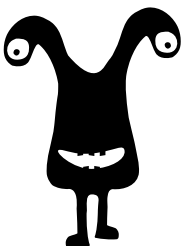
Driving in the car with my cousin
 Time goes past
 We start speeding up
 Flying past other family members
 Skipping time
 We made it to our cousin's house
 To dance and play the game
 Until 11:50
 At 11:59 we all are racing
 To the kitchen to pop the tops off
 The apple cider
 Counting down
 From 10, to toast and scream
 Happy New Year
 Before bed, I call my nephew
 And tell him
 Happy Birthday

Arman Thornton

Mood Swings

I'm so happy I make
 Flowers bloom
 I'm so angry I'm
 Super Saiyan blue
 I'm so happy I
 Get high fives
 I'm so angry that I sit and cry
 I'm so cool that you drool
 I'm so fly
 That I can go up high
 When I'm happy I can make you happy
 I'm so angry
 I can make you angry

Arman Thornton



I Am

The grip to the door knob
 I'm the struggle, ready to be real
 I'm the empty gas tank, ready to be refueled
 I am the plaintiff, ready for judgment
 I am the flour, ready to be boiled
 The god of life
 I AM ARMAN

Arman Thornton



*l-r: Armani Thornton,
Micheal Thornton, Arman Thornton*

I annoy my family

Mama has had enough
My dad told me to stop asking
They are tired of my stuff
Don't like my act most of the time
Always tell me to shape up
They tell me to stop talking
They tell me to clean up my act
They tell me to clean my room
and learn to stop my laughs
but at the end of the day they love me
and still I love them back

Arman Thornton

What Is a Poet?

A poet is a person who thinks bullies are nothing
A poet is someone whose mind is blank
but their paper isn't
A poet is someone who writes what they are thinking of
A poet is someone who thinks outside of their skin,
But stays inside of their skin
A poet has big dream of anything
A poet is you

Arman Thornton





Armani Thornton

The Commitment

Let it be love—let it be misery;
 When I first found you
 What I thought I found in you was love and happiness
 But what I had was depression—that's what I thought.
 Just like the saying, "What goes up must come down"
 That was my self-esteem.
 I was used like a cliché—you carved my heart out
 Like a Thanksgiving turkey stuffed with misery,
 Eaten by your short-lasting love, but you were first
 And people like you will be my last.

Isaiah Hunter



My Fists vs Your Fists

When I make my hands into fists
 they turn into brick.
 They are so hard
 you won't even attempt to fight me.
 My fists are so hard that
 they are like the Thing on
 The Fantastic Four.
 My fists are the hardest you will ever see,
 and my fists are so tasty;
 Talking about me, you
 must want to taste them,
 and what about your fists?
 Your fists are so weak,
 they are like wheat bread,
 bread so weak a hot dog won't fit,
 but my fists are so lit
 they call them the fast & the furious,
 and that's the bottom line, because
 The fists said so.

Marcantony Pierce

I'm Rich

I'm so rich I can buy a million cars
 so rich I can buy a house for everybody
 so rich I can buy a whole jewelry store
 so rich I can make jewelry pizzas
 so rich I can buy Donald Trump's tower
 I'm so rich I can buy a whole complex

Roosevelt Willis

Unfortunately

Unfortunately, I am sick of being nice
People using me as their prey
to get something out of me, the
thought makes me quiver
and it injects a fair amount
of hate into my soul.

The only thing I want is to yell
at everyone and get away with it.
Unfortunately, I am sick of
being told what to do.
Every time someone gives me a task
it's like my heart slowly turns into rust
and irritation fills my brain.

I would rather lie in my bed
watching Youtube on my phone
than be bothered at all.
Unfortunately, I am sick of
unfinished poems.
It makes me feel like I ran out
of imagination.
I would rather end this poem now,
so that my imagination can run on.
Unfortunately for you,
This poem is over.

Tatiana Pierce

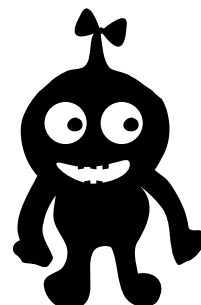
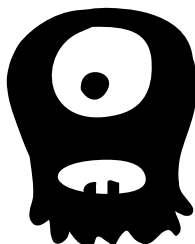
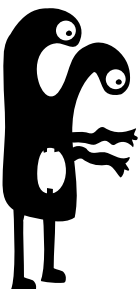


Omarion Butler

The Mad Song

Mean security guard, don't throw away my stuff!
You took away my comics!
You're mad because you're single and alone
and you've got a small little track phone.
You're going to give me my money
and I'm not trying to be funny.
You're just trying to be pressed
because you're so sad and depressed.
That's okay, security guard;
You know you went too far.

Isaiah Hunter





Trevonne Joyner

Mood By Now

Meanwhile, while I try
to complete this poem
I try in despair.
Despairing so hard
I feel like stopping here
because I have nothing to talk about.
So, mama told me nothing
Or, the world revolves around me...
Despairing while the world's still moving
Despairing while the world
is basically making you look dumb
because you're not making a difference.
The type of despair I'm talking about is
childish temper tantrums,
attitudes...
So you could understand.

McKia Bromfield

Big hair beast

Lumpy lumpy at night, and the sun went down and
The sky started getting foggy, the tree had green stuff
Dripping down and it was slimy.

As I tip toe through the woods with my hand shaking
I hear a storm cloud in the sky
I pull out a razor-sharp eye and I am nervous.

Do you see that slithering thing? It is a snake.
(And they are wispy, they are sea green, they have
fangs, venom, shiny eyes) and when it is going
Through the leaves, it makes a trail of mayonnaise.

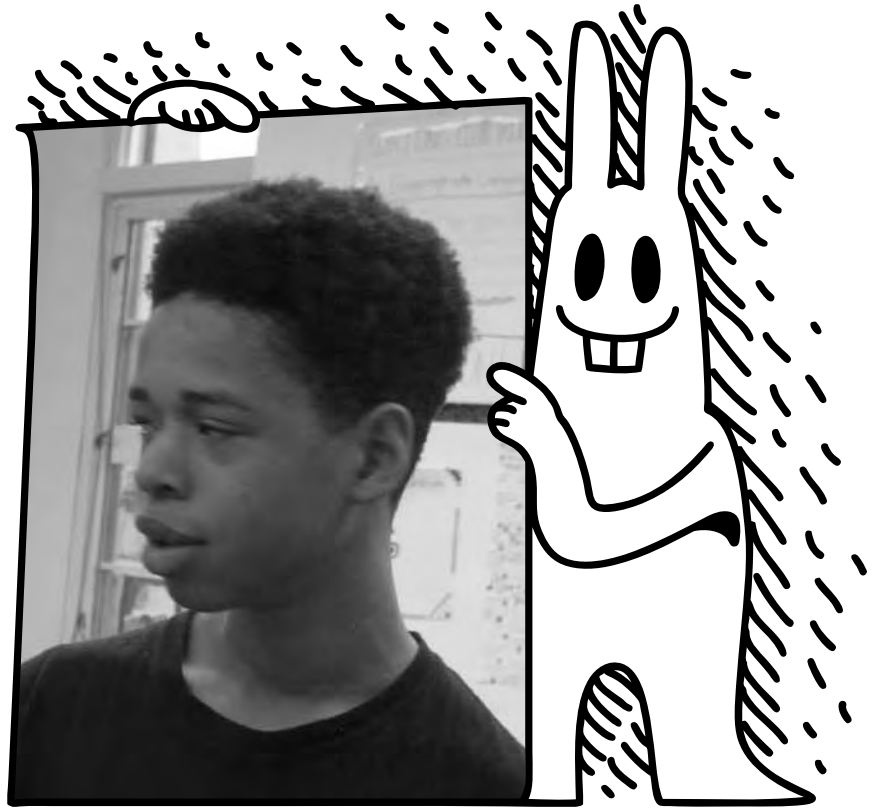
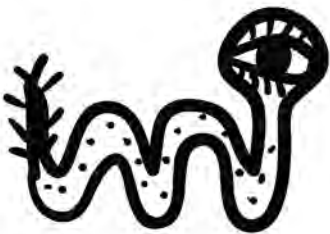
Julio Bouknight



Alliterations

An annoying arrival awaits,
Baptizing birthday belates
Can't catch 'em all, cause
Destructive dimwits do
elegantly enchanting evil.
Fake flirtatious favoritism is feeble
Good God, girls; Go away!
Heck, hello. It's about high time
you irritating, ignorant idiots or imbeciles
just jump for joy. Just
kidding, kids got your karma kicked.
Lying lazy losers,
moronic mounds of monstrosity,
nitwits, nimrods, nincompoops and numbskulls,
open-minded octagons of opposition;
People are persistent little punks.
Quit it, you queens of quiriness
racist, reminiscing, ragtag rugrats,
stupid, stubborn, stingy stalkers,
tedious two-timing traitors,
unbelievably untouchable,
vivaciously vicious,
wicked wimpy witches of the West!
X-ray your xylophone, you
yo-yo. Yeah, you. Your yin, your yang, yo!
Zesty zookeeper, zealously zapping my zen.

Jahir Gray



Isaiah Hunter

Empty Thoughts

I'm underneath farewell:
A haze of gray became me
Surrounding my buried blindness.

Eyes of fear beneath eyes of love,
Rotten storms make wounds innocent;
In front of loneliness
are forever falling leaves.

The flame that creates smoke
is inside your forsaken soul;
Walls of memories turn into grief,
dust floating above everything like
forgotten soldiers.

Yesterday you were on the earth;
Today, you're above the stars.

Tatiana Pierce





Micheal Thornton

Shoulders

I stand on the shoulders of God and my Mom
because they are the best
shoulders to stand on,
and my Mom stands on God's shoulders
to make sure all four of her kids
have a great life.
God will see me praise him
and thank him for waking me up
this morning—my Aunts and Uncles see me
laughing and running down the street.

Marcantony Pierce

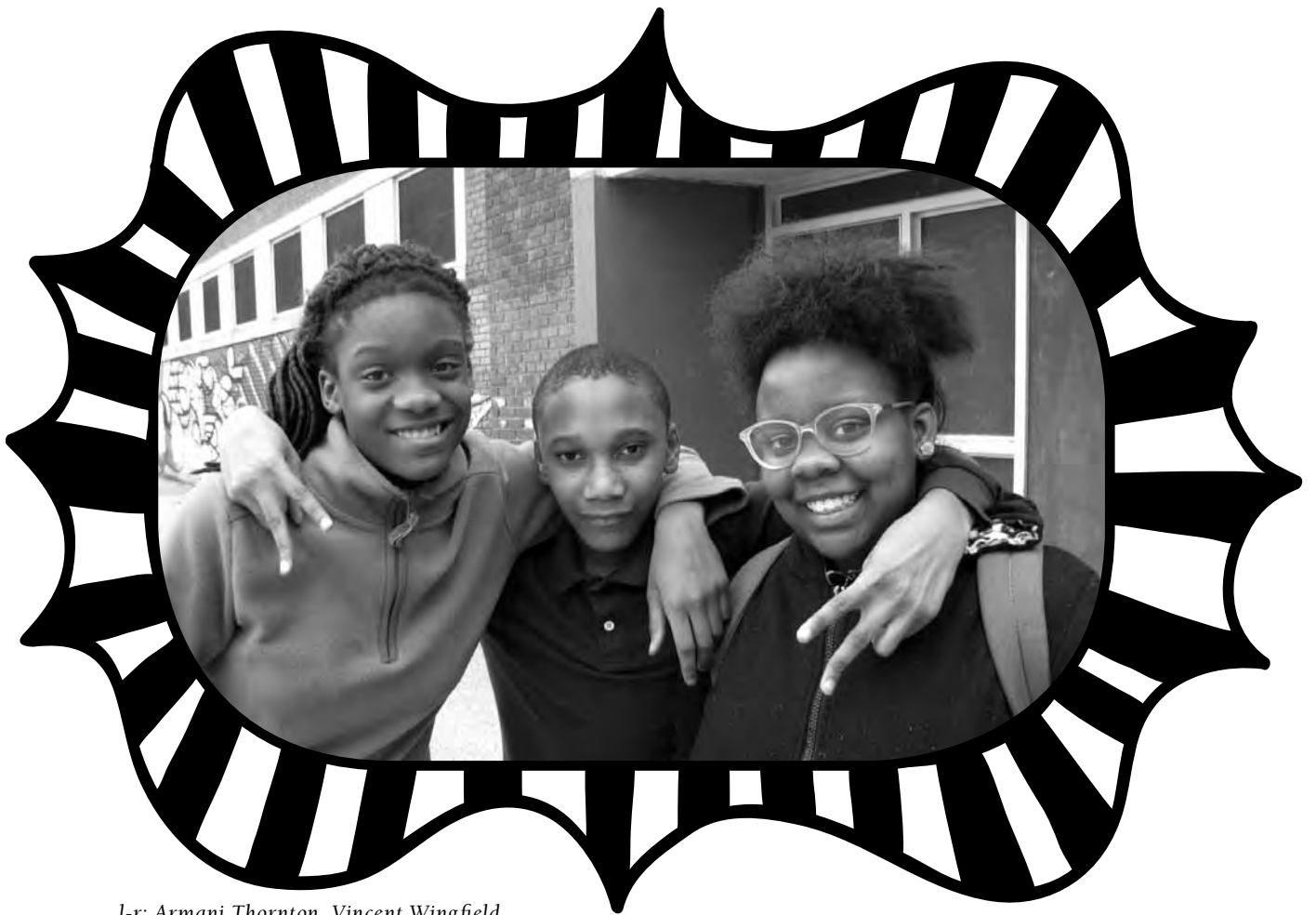


The way of life

Smoke, broken glass, gold stars, the sun's tears
I'm the son of God, brother of a jaguar
I am a lover of football, soccer and tennis
I can feel blue-black, forgotten soldiers
who find happiness in barbed wire
wrapped around fear.

Even though sometimes death thunders, dust hidden
around darkness and strangers,
someone who gives marching orders through
hands, eyes, and gazes through gray flames
will leave footsteps, empty rooms,
hollow train tracks of yesterday.

Julio Bouknight



*l-r: Armani Thornton, Vincent Wingfield,
Nadaisha Wingfield*

Let It Be Known

Let it be known that I'm not in the mood right now!
Let it be known that when I count to ten
you better be gone or there will be
consequences.

The mood I'm in is so savage
if you're not gone, I'm gonna hit you
It's going to feel like a dark dagger.

I never knew how to calm down
until I hit you and it hurt.
So I've learned to calm down,
because I learned a lesson last time.
I calm down,
calm like trees on a spring day.
Let it be known I'm in the mood.

McKia Bromfield





Micheal Thornton

Warning to Your Eye

Eyes don't look at the devil
or you will cry.
Eyes please don't look beyond the skies.
Don't look at the cracks in the ground in the desert
or you will turn dry.
Eyes don't look at the onion
or your head will explode.
Eyes don't look at the snow
or they will stay cold.
Eyes don't look deep into something
or you will lose your soul.
Eyes if you look beyond the skies
you will reach the sky.
Eyes if you look at the police
they will try to kill you.
Eyes look at a doctor
and they will heal you.

De'Quan Atchison

Over the Struggle

Let it be hope in your heart.
Let it be kindness
people around me who would really understand love
Outside of your mind is the struggle where people lost loved ones
Just stay away from the struggle
through the love of your heart
on top of my A game
below the swag
I do for myself
Behind me is the other side of love
and struggle
history with human struggle
with anger that I just can't let out.

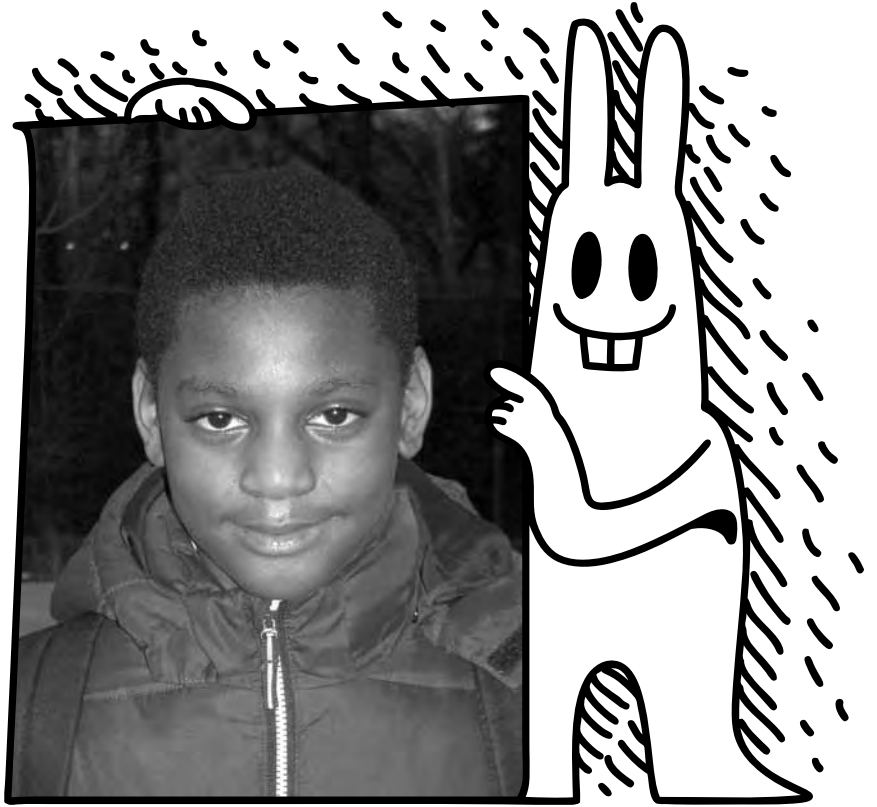
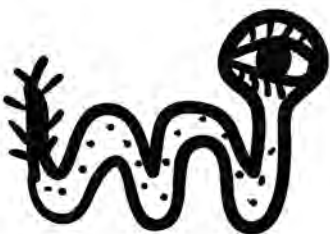
Octavia Johnson



Let it Be

Let it be awesome
Let it be cool
Let it be me
A big fat fool
Let it be a football player playing defense
Or a man telling a woman he loves her

Arman Thornton



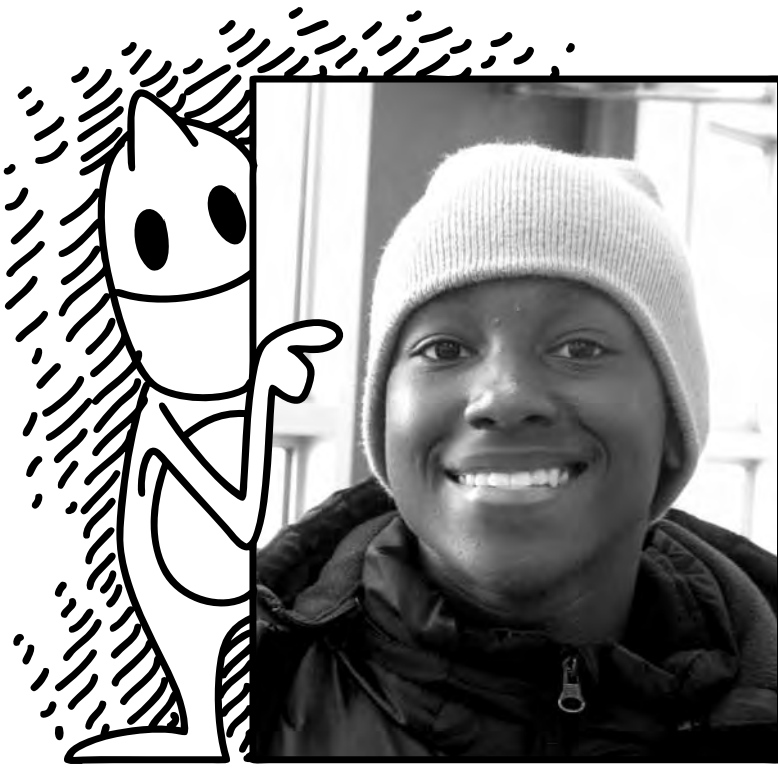
Ernest McBride

Struggle

Lay down these words
before your mind like smoke
placed before the moon
by your eyes in your own state of mind
before the struggle is never forgotten.
Struggle is hard for a lot of people
the stones that are your eyes
are not going to change,
the hide and seek where nobody is going to find you
the freeze tag that you play outside
with the people you've been around
the words are the games y'all play
on TV or on y'all's phones
the struggle is fire to me
the pain I face every day
I wake up and put a smile on my face
to tell people
I'm good.

Octavia Johnson





Tommy Fridle

I Stand On

I stand on belief
 A hard ground on which a young boy was shot dead
 and his mother screamed *My baby*
 I stand in a hood where it's
be about it or turn your back on it
but no one makes it out alive
 I stand in the doorway of what your future is made to be
 and what you make it
 To be or not to be
 Believe or don't believe me
 But the world is held on the shoulders
 of every elder caring for a helpless soul...
 I stand here...

Shannell Jones

Maybe

There are many things I have
 a house, clothes, and food
 But maybe there are other things
 I love, that help my mood

I want to first thank my
 Leo spirit, because it's gotten me far
 But a few things I want to
 add to my list of thanks might be bizarre

Maybe I'm thankful for indoor plumbing
 or music downloaders on my phone
 Maybe I'm thankful for trees and scenes
 of life, the happiness that stops a groan
 Maybe I'm thankful for being a lion
 with a pride that helps me stay strong
 The list could go on for days in ways
 you can't fathom & will be dazed, but I may
 be wrong

I'm grateful for true love,
 if it happened often, it wouldn't be special
 I'm grateful for sleep, because on
 long days I'm never restless
 I'm grateful for those good dreams
 that include good things, because I'm grateful
 for all means of great things

Maybe, no, I am thankful
 and grateful for things that make me full.

Michael Green





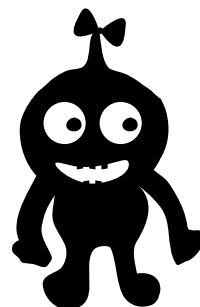
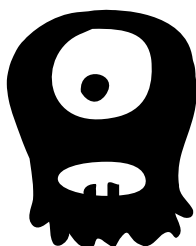
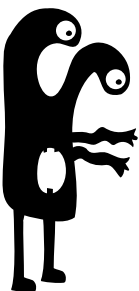
l-r: Isyah Joyner, Micheal Thornton

Frolicking in school

I'm thankful when I'm headed homeward
to do my homework, which makes me smart,
and what's happening is Thanksgiving,
and days off school.

I'm thankful when the dentist appointment is brief
and for my crown—I'm the Princess of Flowers
and I'm proudly happy,
and happily proud
and laughing at things that are funny!

Danai Corbin



Introduction

May I introduce myself:

My heart doesn't
exist, someone threw
a brick at it and it
suddenly was crushed.

Not even hope can come
from Pandora's box,
My heart must be
that common carpet
that is always trashed
after so long.

Sometimes crying
can't mask someone
who's broken.
They won't like how
soon they
will be longing to know
the old kid with a
smile plastered on her
face.

Let her cry, is
what everyone
says, but I say
hold it in til
later.

...The hurt can't
say much, when
they're hurt.

Myniah Sweetney



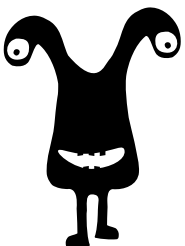
Elijah Hamilton-Todd

Voice

I am the face of the complicated,
the silent, the miniature, the face of the unexpected.
I live to shine, to be great, to conquer.
I believe in the voiceless, I believe in soulless destiny;
I believe in me.

I share my emotions, my thoughts, my inner voice.
My future is distant, yet attainable
but this poem is written for me,
for the voiceless; I listen and put their words on paper
and turn them into reality.
With these voices, dreams, and aspirations
we become the great.

Daizha Chism





*l-r: Trevonne Joyner,
Armani Thornton*

I'm Invincible

I'm underneath the graves of sorrow;
 I'm above you all in the lineup,
 or call it the pipeline.
 I come over you like a shadow
 I can't be touched, I'm like a wildflower
 I'm soft on the inside, hard on the outside of the line.
 I go behind a door, like a window on a balcony
 I come between you like ham and cheese on a Sunday.
 Within 5 miles, I'd be there, up
 to your level of alignment
 when it's called.
 I'm a ghost going through your nightmares
 but I'll be stuck in your mind
 like a wishbone, or thoughts and sorrow.

Christina Cook





Tamia Moyd

June

Colors bright blind to the eyes of the bland
loneliness not even an option
smooth breeze blowing past you
whispering summertime fun ideas to you

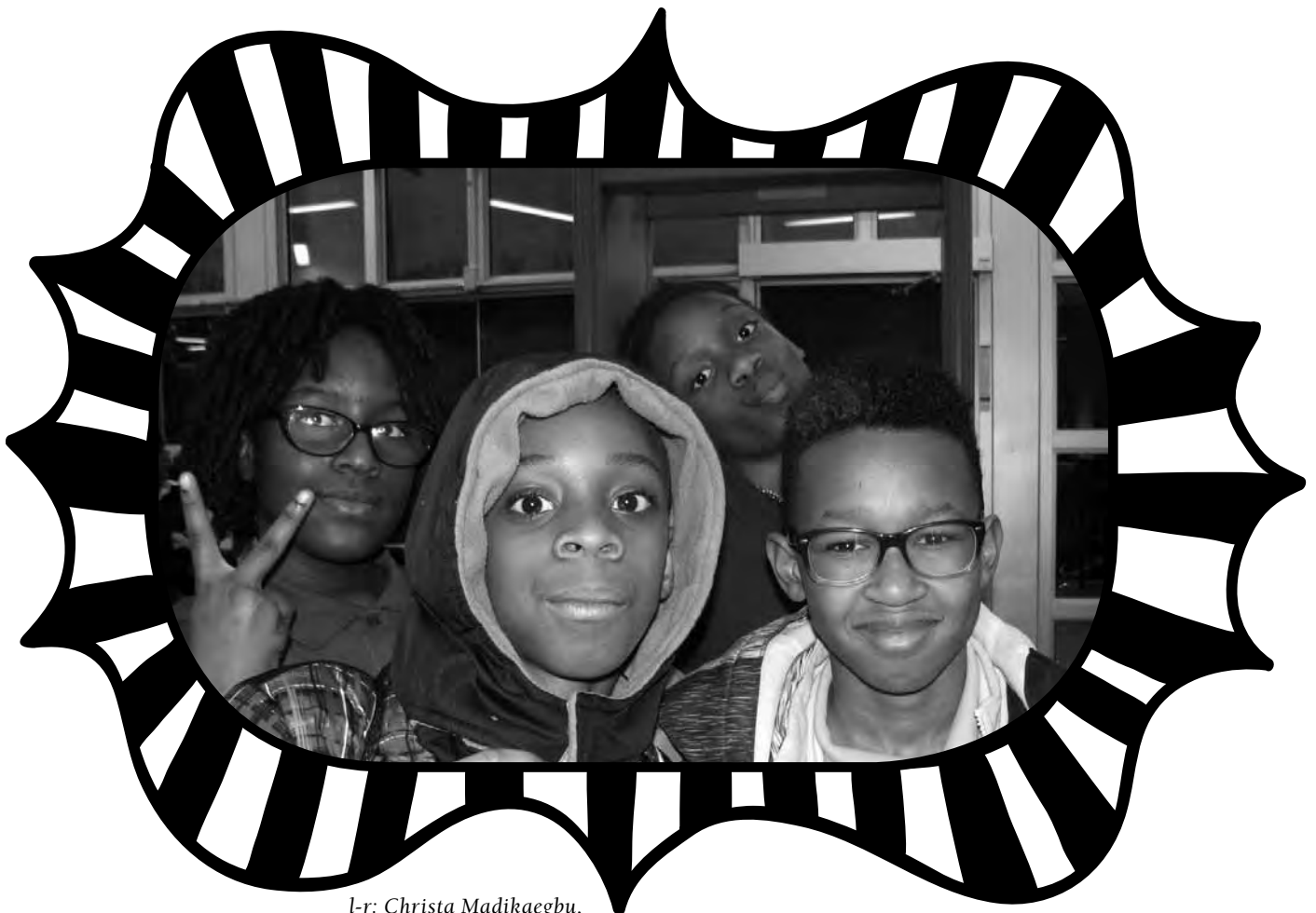
A fragrance of happiness brushing past your nostrils
soft laughter along with minor giggles
tickling past your eardrum
a hurricane of rhythmic music blessing your soul

That summertime moonlight shining down bright like diamonds
Even when it's over, it won't be forgotten
a breeze full of exotic neon flowers spreading around you like an island
lying in a field of grass, listening to the pitter patter of
the small animals running and playing

Fascination of the drastic heat but not fully affected
because of the beach
Memories with friends and effortless fun
June is the month that I live for

Daizha Chism





*l-r: Christa Madikaegbu,
Micheal Thornton, Armani Thornton,
Ethan Atkins*

Alienation

I hate being a human, having no emotions
 I hate feeling lava headed
 I hate waking up to go to school—Judgers,
 just people, get me feeling alienated, unpowered.
 I hate guys trying to figure me out
 I hate being noticed for nothing
 I hate tall boys; they make me sad.
 I'd rather be tall as a tree;
 It would be lovely to see how it feels to be tall,
 or powered with love, hate, anything
 to make me different.
 I'd rather be a publisher, or famous;
 I'd rather hibernate than go to school.
 I hate when boys act fake around me--
 I'm a planet, and I have no one to bother me for a week.
 I hate school, when students want to get your attention
 by being annoying to you.
 I'd love to be a shadow;
 No one would bother me.

Christina Cook

Let It Be Life

Throw me down the wishing well of dreams
 landing on a pedestal of chili-hot haze;
 Take me to a beautiful field of flowers,
 ginger-vanilla fragrance in the empty air;
 Alive, but departed from the body,
 I will look down at my stillness
 with a guard so defensive, yet fragile...
 I feel unprotected, but protected
 by the angel of love and hate,
 a white-wave whirlwind with a
 longing hope for kindness,
 that is misunderstood by
 the conscience of anger.

Christina Taylor





Nadaisha Wingfield

The Dilemmas in Life

Do I enjoy the delicate lace-filled breeze,
with diamonds for rain and a pearl as the sun,
or the broken lightbulb swaying
in the middle of a dark cage-like room
with a single wilted rose?

Do I accept the mirror of unyielding humiliation,
which howls at dawn to signal me
a sign of unwanted despair,
or expect mahogany greatness,
kindness so sweet, the taste buds
confuse it for bitter
leaving its niceness at the door?

Life has its dilemmas, choices,
minds not easily made up,
but easily persuaded,
easily stumbled upon by
the world of random ideas.

Christina Taylor

The Unmeasurable

The basics of time can be changed
as people move on, how the clock circles
and you begin to fade away.
The immeasurables of love are held by your partner
as you give yourself to them, you feel relief
but also an instant pressure of
how much their passion compares to yours.
The time has come to love the past
as much as you can be passionate for the future.
Love always asks the questions:
How will it work?
What elements play into our relationship?
How can this time and love
be unbroken, but also healed?
Life is measured by love
and the time spent in the world.

Remington Crawley





*l-r: Micheal Thornton,
James Joyner*

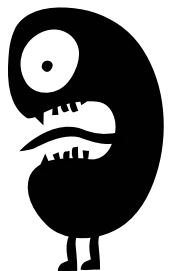
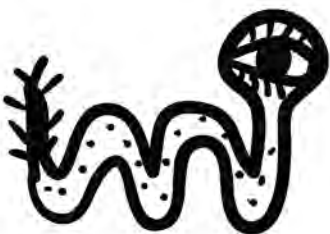
Chaos in a world of confusion

You do not have to love me.
You do not have to take care of the connection
we have, for any cause or reason.
You only have to be there, to be there for me
and support the positives in my life.

Tell me about your powerful shadows
and I will reveal mine.
Meanwhile, I've been defeated and distant;
I'm sorry I caused so much debate.
Meanwhile, people fall apart
and reconnect like a plug and an outlet.
Meanwhile, the chaos and craziness grow and
progress like people in ancient times.
Meanwhile, I try overlook the love crimes
committed through the rapper's crazy rhymes.

Whoever you love, you always have to
remind yourself of all those memories;
Remember that shadow will come out
no matter what kind of light you have.
Let your creations and soul take the darkest moments away.
Do not be conquered by
tranquil thoughts and chaotic control freaks—
Just know I will always love you.

Remington Crawley



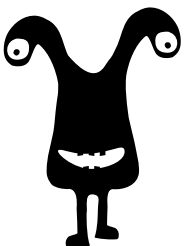


Arman Thornton

I'm Sorry

The moment wasn't right;
I narrow my chances as time flies.
Sitting in a window, you became sorry for yourself.
You thought your ugliness was too much
and your energy was uncalled for.
I'm sorry I sit and ignore the alarm
that says *Get over it*
and keep pushing snooze.
I'm sorry you want me to remember
but the smoke is too heavy; I can't see them.
I'm sorry for leaving you invisible for so long.
I'm sorry you have to hold a keychain
with broken emotions, because I wish death—
never upon you, but on the hurt.
I'm sorry I appear to be pale
but I promise I won't fail to finish the feelings
you have for me...
I know... I know...
Why am I saying sorry?
Because the moment I don't, I will be...
I'm sorry.

Shannell Jones





d.c. creative writing workshop

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Inside back cover, l-r: Armani Thornton, Vincent Wingfield, Nadaisha Wingfield





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