



HARTWORKS

Summer 2001 • \$1



Featuring Author
Alan Cheuse

The Charles Hart Middle School Literary Magazine

Introduction

Welcome to this year's final edition of *hArtworks*, a literary magazine published by the students of Charles Hart Middle School, in southeast Washington, D.C. *hArtworks* gives our young writers the opportunity to exercise their creative energies, speak their minds, and be heard by an audience throughout the city. For the past six years, Hart students have had the opportunity to work with professional writers in a workshop that has brought them widespread acclaim and numerous literary awards. This year, the D.C. Creative Writing Workshop was incorporated as a public-private partnership to provide our students with a full-fledged creative writing magnet program that reaches all of the more than five hundred students who attend Hart. Our students are now writing poems, plays, stories and essays in their classes, and in three specialized weekly writing clubs.

As the year draws to a close, we celebrate our many successes and discoveries: Our students have traveled to museums, bookstores, plays, and poetry readings; they have written a play, their own adaptation of Sophocles' "Antigone", and are preparing to perform it for the community; they have earned numerous awards and prizes, including an unprecedented eight winners in the Parkmont Poetry Contest; they have published three issues of the city's first middle school literary magazine. But most of all, they have had fun. Members of the D.C. Creative Writing Workshop are already looking forward to next year, and a new season of learning.

We have many friends who have helped to make the expansion of our writing program possible, and we would like to express our gratitude to them. Our sincerest thanks go out to the Arcana Foundation, the Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, the Commonweal Foundation, Borders Books and Music, Free Hand Press, Betsy Holt and Ms. Printing Company, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, Arena Stage, Andrew Chin and his colleagues at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, Bernie Horn and the Center for Policy Alternatives, our friends at Popeye's on Malcolm X Avenue, Esther Cohen, Alan Cheuse, Chris Erlewine, Jon Gerson, Arnost Lustig, Paul Mandelbaum, Mark Simon, Henry Taylor, Vera M. White, Ruth Dickey, Venus Brevard, Ticora Jones, Michael Jordan, Daniel Yacykewych and our dedicated volunteer Dennis Collins.

We would also like to thank the following administrators, teachers, and staff who are our partners in this endeavor: Superintendent Paul L. Vance, Assistant Superintendent for Middle/Junior High Schools Vera M. White, Principal Lee E. Epps; Assistant Principals Willie Bennett, Yvonne Davis, and Samuel Scudder; Ms. Molly Buckley, Ms. Gloria Fergusson, Ms. Shirley Grooms, Ms. Carolyn Jackson, Ms. Mary Johnson, Ms. Irma Morgan and Ms. Ethel Rivers; Ms. Eleanor Elie, Ms. Lisa Henry, and Ms. Neta Vaught.

Last, we thank you, the reader, for giving our writers the chance to be heard.

Nancy Schwalb, Executive Director
D.C. Creative Writing Workshop

The hArtworks Editorial Board

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Spirit of Darkness

I hear the crickets creak
The water is dripping from every faucet

The darkness is tiptoeing into my room,
while the refrigerator is humming a solitary tune

A door of weeping opens and shuts
It's a mother taking over darkness

I see myself in a white room
wishing that I could just go to sleep

The echoes of darkness surround me
while the covers are over my head

I fear the spirit of darkness
as it makes these scary faces on my wall

Tarika Winchester



Shawntice Patterson

Falling Leaves

Leaves falling from trees
Red, blue, green, yellow
Soaring in the sky-blue sky,
the sun making them brighter.
The leaves catch my eyes
and my ears were attracted to the sound
soon the wind dangled my keys and
snapped me out of it.

Pamula Twyman

purple haze

Spaced out in a purple haze,
Lying out in a vacant lot;
People pass by,
Staring down at me.
Gray skies cover my day;
Empty stomach as I lie on my back
Drifting away
No place to stay,
Thinking of where I started.
How did I get here?
It was just months ago I was hooking school,
Dealing with friends
Thinking I was cool
Going nowhere
Going where I am
I no longer have a chance
To become a man.
Now, I don't know what I'm gonna do
With no food and no shoes on my feet.
I'm like a squirrel preparing for winter when it's time to eat.
Memories flutter through my mind;
I'm like a rainbow being poured,
But at this moment I am no more.
How I wish I had made the right decisions;
Right now I need an intermission.

Timeka Brown

It's Like That!

Condon Terrace
blue, green
Ocean City's in between
class rules
open books
pencils, pens overlook
eyes brown
pretty face
in a car, well don't be late
long hair
skinny arm
that's the way they like me
long day, time to rest
see you later, and
it's like that!

Jessica Young



Psychotic

Ill of my ignorance, with holy redemption inside,
I diluted my years with narcotics
and went through trauma while trying to visit the saints.
Once my corrupted life bounced back on track,
the angels lingered around harvested fruit,
and there I was:
free from the disappointments of church,
brought by the strand of pain that stresses my fire.
Two burning flames, invested in the power of my will,
your will, and my guilt
that the court found to be guilty.
Innocent in my book of lessons that a legion couldn't combine,
not the American legion, but my legion of accusations.
You can cross the flares of the flag,
but little do you know—
I am the flag.
And you're hating on my insaneness.
The smears of my blood, shattering a sphere
of schizophrenia that's been counseled
symptoms of digested pills, straining the feel
of our taste buds that taste the banana splits, the cherry pie
and watches the flicks of flickering lights
that has molted into two.
I am cranky, delusional, and the inferior of your superior being,
with my endurance of your insanity.
Am I the four course meal you're waiting for,
or are you just using my gravitational breakfast for your own amusement?
I'm sorry that my humorous brain can't be balanced,
but know that I am psychotic.

Amani Al-Fatah

Drizzly Like Clouds

I behold the center of my invaded symphony of snowy clouds
and metamorphic sanitational cravings
for a bow-of-arrow scientific tulips
that come herding down my way like sheets of blue
and Asian birds crossing the grass in its own life story.
Bah, Humbug! I'm changing like Spring, moving like cameras.
I realize that this whole thing they call seasons—
change incandescent light bulbs and give me unclear reasons,
reasons of doubt that bricks shouldn't be red
and life should be as clear as a thick boat sailing through ancient times
that have been remiss.
I missed the eclipse of an equinotical sky,
I blame all hell for the intense quality that I don't deserve,
and think about how the seasons go from yellow to black to blue to green
to Palmolive dish liquid that makes dishes squeaky clean,
like olive brown zest
and a breakfast made of cold saliva,
spitting heat, cold and dreary fossils into seasons.
I feel the frosted flakes giving me a perspicacious feeling
that my ring a ding ding bell, well
click, clack, clank to the beat of my belly,
shaking out the sunny greens of my Jupiter planets
all corrupting, confusing my abused season,
like the sanctified rains of holy dust,
shaking live a Spring-hot-blizzard day.
I know now I am more human
than a humor of fake coughs, of seasons.

Amani Al-Fatah



Decision

I
shall
not
be
sad
because
I
am
happy.

Kimberly Owens

Family Portrait

Grandma is gone up to heaven
Where the lord says she belongs.
Auntie and Grandpa, too.
Babies are being born,
Aunts, cousins, and uncles are getting married.

My kinfolks are not getting along;
All of this confusion in my family.
I just don't understand:
People are stressed, pressed and depressed.
All of this unhappiness in my family.

Mama feels like moving her family away
From all this confusion.
I have to come to school with a pretty smile on my face
Knowing that my family will be okay.

And when we get together, everyone smiles for the day
When we get together, everyone sits with a smile on their face.

Indiria Hill



Darrell Butler

One Day

One day on a bus ride home,
I was looking out the window when I saw
a boy riding a skateboard, skating,
which reminded me of a commercial
with a man
skiing down a mountain full of snow.

Josimar Smith

Family Portrait

I'm about to take a picture,
but first I want to tell you how it is:

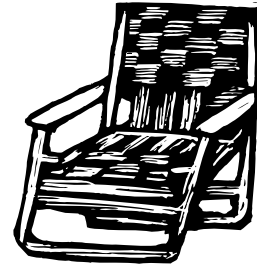
Yes, it's a room filled with chaos;
my grandmother is in the room
throwing chairs at my father
because he didn't cook the macaroni and cheese right.

The cousins are all pulling each other's hair
because someone broke a nail,
the rocking chair is rocking to a sound that never plays,
the walls are black with white lines,
the couch is broken, with one leg standing
and one pillow left.

The mirrors are cracked, but spell words.
The windows don't close, but shine with black light.
The sisters and brothers are fighting over the cupcakes
that were sent to us from Egypt years ago.

I snap the picture.
Yes! There is my marvelous family.

Shawntice Patterson



Things wake up before I do

Things wake up before I do,
like shoes,
fancy socks,
and someone's clothes.
There are bathtubs
and stoves
and two people, a couple as you say,
drinking coffee.

People come out before I do
driving their cars and then
stores open too,
and all that happens when
I'm going to school.

Antonio Ashford



Left to right: Gregory Finch, Stephen Staton

Ode II

(from Antigone 2K1: The Tragedy Continues)

Lightning bends to snatch souls and cast them in rivers;
Sinful lips eclipsed the real broken commandments;
As evening splits abyss in godly wraths
That strike the repercussions of moral arrogance.

As the slaying of the firstborn moon slashed ashes among children,
Among children who pollute the world with their innocence—
Eternally damned offspring of Oedipus, who, as the sun whispered tans on their faces,
Made them clueless with iridescent days, making their youth stop bringing truth to their
doom.

There was no Zeus or raging God whose heart throbbed his temporal arteries in eternal
punishment.
They weren't fazed when celestial rebellion swarmed their immortality.
'Twas America's rich and money-filth mansions swept in gold tooth smiles,
Be costing more than what lies above Olympus,
While standing amidst that sweet yellow that looms above the echoes of the clouds.

Larry Robertson

Silence

Silence talked to me in a loud voice.
He told me to talk loud but I was silent.
So he left me there like I leave peas on my plate.

Pamula Twyman



Ode III

(from *Antigone 2K1: The Tragedy Continues*)

Dido, unperishable garbage disposer of milk and honey,
Rich reaper of traffic rays and running red lights with chariots
In the caress-worthy female sea serpent of the swamp.

Even the knaves of immorality cannot flee from her;
And one breathing, thuggish ruggish bone,
In his one 24-hour ritual
Trembles before her brittle essence.

Surely you sway amidst doom.

The prissy Mohican's signed heart
As in the very spot he has made luminous anger,
Bent lightning between sperm donor and offspring
And none has slayed love with iridescent words.

A girl's gaze laboring the biblical laws falling from celestial paradise,
Pleasing pleasure to her in seclusion
Who mocks us, florescent Babylon.

Larry Robertson

Native

Beautiful leaping leaves, blowing from trees
by the whispering wind
while women bend over wearing
“Red Essence” perfume and red clothes,
on the dark, dangerous streets.
With broken-down blinking lights and houses
that look like test subjects from planet Mars,
and brothers and sisters from Uranus;
With cows and horses, parents getting divorces
kids in college taking choices they’ve never heard of,
but still go to wild parties,
get shot up, but still got up
like nothing happened,
and you fell into the grace of your passions.
That’s why you have to fight for your life
every night and day, so lets go play
on the playground,
and when I hit you, I mean stay down.

Londell Swales



Vernika Banks

Summer

The summer smells wet
like the sun

The little child wears dirt like
ants, flies, and bugs, crying for
help when they’re being beaten
with the swatter.

The summer is my child, being
my dust, my allergies
my friend, being
pollen in my shoes
not caring where I go.

Lauren Taylor

Benjamin Slave

Then she crawled from beneath the master bed
onto the chenille carpet,
as she veered out the cherrywood double doors,
down the marble staircase,
saw the detective leave the mansion,
with his trenchcoat strap stuck in the main entrance,
declared it an illegal mistake,
without the warrant.
Was the man with the male principle
able to explain himself
when she unleashed the bruises of her chagrin?
Because she wouldn't, couldn't,
shouldn't cry,
crying vapid
acid rain.

Was it a bubblegum explosion,
with jolly rancher grenades,
full of sweet and bitter mmmms
and cravings for seconds?

As she switched and strode to the center of the ballroom,
beneath the chandelier and
English grandfather clocks tick, tick
talking, speaking of when
they had get-togethers, with lemon peppered chicken,
instead of cookouts with potato salad and beer.

She pointed to the ceiling,
disappointed and beaten
by challenges.
Erect fingers brought back memories
of when their childhood friends

caught mono during their affairs.
When they collapsed,
she and the drug lord from Jamaica,
shriveling withering,
withering, shivering
marriage.

After she filed for divorce,
was she ready to give it up,
structure herself financially?
Will he be illegally acclaimed by his hustlers,
whose deaths were so prophetic
and cliché?

Though he got the Lamberghini and the mansion,
she was granted all the furniture,
including the built-in countertops.
And to this day, this elderly veteran,
slave to all that was and will be materialistic
houses all her leather love seats and glass tables
in the basement of her six-figure townhouse
in the urban nether regions.

Underground, beneath
in the decaying sanctums
where spider webs consume
the left armrest, where
she once rested her arm
while sipping champagne,
combining her pain,
making her consume her own ecstasy.

Larry Robertson

The best self-portrait

There I see a boy with gloves,
paper, hat, and boots, with
his basketball and football.

There are cars and
a video game lying on a bed.
There is a piece of paper
lying on the floor,
fresh, clean, heavenly.

That is the best self-portrait
in the whole nation.

Antonio Ashford



*Left to right: James Thomas, Roosevelt Jones, Delonte Williams,
Timothy Miller*

Hot Like Fire

Winter is hot like fire
flames of life fall in grief
My nose is on fire from
the pasture of burning weeds.
These weeds are violent,
so I hear no sympathy for their problems.

I feel none of their problems because of
the thorns left in little children's hands.
I saw them dancing upon the fire and the moonlight
touching the weeds will bring forever
winter through the skies.

They dance and dance, moving
to the music touching their spirits
hearing cries all through the land.

They laugh at the jokes,
the children's laughter can fill the Grand Canyon
The winter was still hot like fire.

Donna James

Winter Blues

Summer is gone and I'm exhausted with pain.
As the rain hits my window I see the death of
the naked trees. I gather up my blankets
and turn up the fire as I'm
drifting with sorrow. I'm missing the
summer sun and the swimming pool and
missing the flowers that bloom.
I don't know why summer is gone.
What was I to do?
My sophisticated ways are thrown in the snow,
where they are buried with another horrible day,
and I'm so mad and cranky.
When I walk down the slippery
road, I feel frostbite in my shoes,
the thunder strikes like its mad at me and
the light in the sky is lonely.
The gray sky above makes
the world look dead and ugly,
which is thrown in my face like a snowball.
My lonely, unhappy days begin
and I'm suffering with the Blues.

Chakia Chatman



Mind Games

All I have done
Is linger on this bench
Even the birds have done more things
I think about eating, but there is nothing to cook
I want to dress, but there is nothing to wear

I sit on the ground,
Like a patient etherized upon a table
I feel like a microphone
walked over and talked on
A flower with no
petals to drop
A vacuum cleaner that picks up junk.

Mercedes Johnson

All Mankind

On the first date they leave you breathless,
then they don't call or come by,
and they leave you in a state of desperation.
Soon you become vulnerable and lonely;
You are miserable, and you say you
never want to talk to another man again.
Then you start to think that all men are deceitful,
and you call them scrubs and what not.
You leave them liable for breaking your heart;
nevertheless you seek revenge,
not just on your first heartbreak
but on all mankind.

Jessica Adair



Brooke Quick, Charmyonne Bailey

Listen For That Sound

The heartbeat of a dead man
surrounded by hands
stomping and clapping
still trying to find
the lonely, the happy
unbearable sound
that sound of the kettle in the kitchen
the running of the track people
that sound
I have no clue
what could it be
my hands
the thunderstorm
the rain when it hits the ground
the clock when it strikes twelve
no one would ever know.

Alicia Harris

Buried Alive

In all the goodbyes to my casket
inside of my hearse,

In the graveyard of drug dealers,
alcoholics, and murders

In Las Vegas, gambling
for the cost to be buried,

In all, I laugh when I am dead
but buried alive

But when all is gone and all is come
I am one of some.

As in all of my groom I am bride
I still am someone's child.

Tyanna Dowdy



My Sorrow

April rains come on like
a dripping faucet.
Drip. Drip. Drip.
The water overflows
the banks of the Mississippi.
The ferry boats swirl round
and round like a
tornado in disguise.
The rain falls the way
a rock falls, falling 100 mph
again, and again, and again.

Darrell Butler

The past is easy to forget

The past is easy to forget, but when
you look at a picture, it just
comes back to you.
I got up one morning, and I ran
down the steps.
As I turned to the left, I saw
a picture of me.
The look on my face
was kind of upsetting,
but as I look at the other kids in the pictures,
they look very happy.

Chase Moore

School Life

Around everyone in the school is a camera,
watching our every move.

In the school cafeteria, the bathroom, the
counselor's office, where everyone is heading.

In clean bathrooms, on dirty floors,
you know that's wrong.

In the principal's office. In the teacher's classroom.

In the hallway, going down the steps,
sitting in squeaky chairs, writing on broken desks
sharpening pencils on broken pencil sharpeners,
waiting for the bell to strike 3:15,

because it seems time has stopped on 3:14.

The bell sounds, out the door we go.

All that's a part of School Life.



Amani Al-Fatah

Tiara Vest

The way we be

On the bus ride this morning, we
rode past a homeless man living in the
street. The sun reflected off a woman's
glasses, making it hard to see. As I
looked out the window, I could see a police
officer writing tickets.

I remembered when my cousin Stevie
went to California to change his life
around, but ended up in jail.
Now he's out, but it doesn't
matter. He's trying to come down
here, but it won't work. He can't blame
no one but himself, because everyone
down here can only raise themselves.

Gloria Walker

Who are you?

You supersonic, idiotic
brain infected, disconnected jerk.
Who are you to
tell me the sun don't shine?
Or is it one practical joke?

Who are you to accidentally tell me
that I am not magnificent, I am
not enthusiastic or
encouraging, and won't succeed?

Or maybe the superintendent
can tell me something different.
Do you appreciate, or do you criticize?

Do you know that you are just
a figment of my imagination?
Who are you to give me
an appointment to Saint Elizabeth's?

Exactly
who are you?

Jessica Young

I Thank

I thank you for the colors
blue, yellow, orange, and black.

Thank you for the birds, the trees, the grass,
the rain and sun.

Thank you for the earth, the moon,
and the island at the center of the earth
where a man is standing, waiting
for me to finish this poem.

Ebony Love



Strange Things

An orange star shines on the shady sea
while the man that can't cry stands eating a silver fruit
while the moon refuses to blast its blue light,
chicken wings fly rough through the air
The man with prison blues eats yellow corn.

Delonte Williams

The Head of Spring

Green grass grows, some being reborn
as others die away. Trees coming alive
from withering, and their clothes are
blown and whipped away from them.

Blossoms bloom into the old and magnificent
color of reddish pink. Flowers are being
reborn, awakening from their death.

Colors are rude, and the day
pushes the plants and trees, and causes
them to sway.

The sun brushes against the air, clutching it
as if it's a hug.

Wither away, will you, orange, red, purplish blue.
Die away, will you,
roars the green color of new times.

Kiona Bean



Carlos Williams

The Center of Summer

The hot orange reddish sun beaming,
burning, sweat. Everything seems
to take longer in the sun, the
water hardly cold enough, air
conditioning broken. Ahhh. When will
this end, not enough clothes to take off,
pool full of people. Ice
melts too fast. When will summer
end and winter begin? When
will the heat cool?

Stop. Stop. Stop. Sitting
under a fan that only blows
warm air. What can I do? I am
burning up— cold shower
never lasts long enough now to escape
this. What's the word? Hotter, hotter,
and what's this hotter? Take me away
far, far away, to a very cold place.

Catherine Walkin

Scatter Bus

Scatter bus past by the soft pool.
It was a sunny day with blood all over it.
It ran over a candlestick by a daisy road.
The bus driver was made of devil's blood.

Lanita James

Dead Man Inc. Poem

Blood man's a dead man standing in bloody rain.
Next to the rainy shadow up beneath the wall
Easting blood-sandwiches staring at the red moon
as soft candles melt from the flames.
In the darkness as he stands
I guess he's a dead man.

Brandon Robbins



I Came Upon a Midnight Clear

It came upon a midnight clear
Do you hear what I hear?
A noise coming from the blue fall summer year
Red moon swimming in the ocean,
Hoping that I would see you
Day by day, night by night,
Hoping you will be all right.

Lalita Ward

Soul Surfing

I am surfing with my soul beside me
trying to catch the tide,
twirling and dancing on the water,
dreaming and singing on the tide

Krystina Andrews

The Nice Gifted Foolish Mind-Twisted Poem

The man delivers the gold that sold time
We watch as they hinder
the elegant fearless superhero

The broken and adamant
munch on silver money

They sold the grateful superman
for carryout days
As time passes but slows down
my mind decreases in looks

The people stop to review
the punch for the 100% clutch

This street poem
is mixed in an elegant way

Carolyn Mozee



The Keys of Water

The ocean is like a big key
trying to open up the sky

The rain is like keys falling from the sky
but you notice it doesn't hurt
when it hits you in your face

The river is like a key that never stops growing
with steel keys and brass knuckles

The puddles of water
the rain or power keys
leave the scraps of wounded food
and the keys are not needed
but water is

Marc Gunter

September Lies

September lies where
did you go, left the sun,
did me so cold.
So when winter turns
into summer, I will cry
my September lies.

Everywhere I go
I always see your face.
I try to let it pass
but my mind just can't erase.
So I try to fall, but everything
leads to you.

September lies where
did you go, left
with the sun, did
me so cold.
So when winter turns
into summer, I will cry
my September lies.

My September lies
never give up on your hopes
and dreams, just listening
to that voice in your head.

September lies,
September lies.

Anna Myers



Lindsey Herbert, Pamula Twyman

It Is This Way With Life

The sun shines and the grass is green
but the words we speak aren't always clean.
The buildings are not a part of the suburbs
and the trees are bare, tall humans
and you see the trash flowing with glass.
It is this way with life when your clothes aren't clean
and your hair always shines.
It is this way with life
when your legs are like twisting tops of joy
when the sound of go-go appears
and you become acquainted with the sound of garbage.
It is this way with life
as the bus runs north and south
and your soulmate never wants to walk
and your job always bugs you.
It is this way with life
when the smoke becomes your mind.
It is this way with life all the time.

Lorice Young

The Name

The old man goes about
crying purple tears.
At night his eyes glow
but he still knows he lives.

The old man who goes about
has a name to bear.
Many people talk about
his poverty and despair.

He lives anywhere.
He knows one day he got lucky
and found some money.
His teeth are a rainbow smile.
he eats spaghetti wild,
hungry as can be.
He pleads to do his deeds.

Yolanda Butler



Lalita Ward

God Give Me Strength

God give me strength
especially patience at school.
It seems like I should be dead.
Everyday there is a knife
going through my back,
up to my heart.
It hurts so bad I have to yell out
God give me strength
especially when they're supposed
to be my friends and they
stab me with a knife the hardest.
The blood flows out
in the words
God give me strength.

Tiffany McCollough

The Truth About the Mask

I see the way the people way up high wear the mask from the big blue sky,
When I see the people wear their masks it makes me want to ask why.
Why hide what God put you on this earth for? Why hide your outside?

Ask the white cloud for forgiveness to talk to your inner self
Ask God if your blood sleeps, burning you inside.
We ask why do we do this to ourselves? Would we ever know the truth
Unless the answer pops out of the truth?

The mask is in the past and in the future—so stop the fighting and listen to what the
earth has to say.

Thaddeus Teel



Story

There was a boy that was very depressed.
He was crying on the inside and only saw darkness.

The only thing he saw was fire and demons.
He fought them all, one by one.

His mother walked in, looking at her son,
holding a gun up to him.

She said “No son, don’t do it.
The TV went black.

DeWayne Childs

I Wear the Mask

Sleeping, burning times of the past
Performing dressed up dreams did not last
White blood slowly unraveled
Smoky, gray mud while I live despite
the dangerous selling buildings of Harlem.
The worn-out girls burn while sleeping.

Tonika Smith



HARTWORKS

presents
our special guest

Alan Cheuse

Left to right: Yasmine Knatt, Sitembile Knatt, Alan Cheuse, Antonio Ashford, Larry Robertson

Alan Cheuse is the author of many books, including novels, short story collections, and the memoir *Fall Out of Heaven*. His literary commentary can be heard weekly on National Public Radio's "All Things Considered." He is also a professor of English at George Mason University. He lives with his wife Kris O'Shee and their dog Bella in Northwest D.C., where he was interviewed by Charles Hart Middle School students Antonio Ashford, Sitembile Knatt, Yasmine Knatt, and Larry Robertson. The students prepared for the interview by reading selections from Mr. Cheuse's short story collection *The Tennessee Waltz*.

Yasmine: Why are your stories so short?

Alan Cheuse: Every story has its own length. Every story has its own proper size. Some are very short; some are very long. It's not a cookie cutter, where you just make everything the same size. It depends upon what the story's about, and how long you need to tell it.

Sitembile: What made you start writing?

Alan Cheuse: I started writing late. I always wanted to be a writer, but I didn't start writing until I was in my late thirties. I did a lot of other things, and finally I just couldn't help it, and I just started doing it. It took me over after a while, even though I tried not to do it. So it's an obsession; it's something you feel compelled to do. Which is not always a good thing, but in this case, I hope it's a good thing.

Antonio: What got you started in being a writer?

Alan Cheuse: Well, I read a lot. I did a lot of reading, and then I started writing little reviews about the books I was reading. So those were the first things I did as writer, outside of school. I worked as a reporter for a business newspaper in New York, so I wrote, I got published, but not fiction. It wasn't until I was about thirty-nine that I started writing and publishing fiction seriously, which is kind of late for a writer. Actually have a piece coming out this week in the *New York Times*, in that "Writers on Writing" series. It's a little essay that I call "Starting Late," where I talk about that.

Larry: Of all the formats and styles of writing, why short stories?

Alan Cheuse: Well, I do stories, but I also write novels, I write essays. I do short stories in between long books. When I'm between long books, I'll write maybe half a dozen stories before I start another long book. The good thing about writing stories is, you can do one in about a month, and then it's over, which is a good feeling—you've finished something. A novel you work on for years and years and years, you don't really have that sense of finishing something.

Yasmine: How come there weren't any names mentioned in your story "The Call"?

Alan Cheuse: Because it's a little more mysterious than the usual kind of story, so you just kind of get dropped into the story. It's kind of dream-like. You know when you dream, you really don't know who the people are in your dreams. That's the effect I was trying to create.

Sitembile: How do you think of what to write?

Alan Cheuse: I keep a little notebook, and when things come to me, I write them down. Sometimes it's just a line I've heard of something—somebody says something and it stays in my head, and I'll write that down. Then I'll try to figure out who it was who was saying it. Sometimes it's an image of something I've seen, that I'll try to describe, and that will start a story rolling along. So it's not always the same, and it's hardly ever what people call "ideas. I don't think writers get "ideas" for what they write. It just sort of comes to you, more like music. You start humming a little tune for yourself; writing is much closer to that than say, "Oh, I'm going to write a biography of Harriet Tubman," or something like that. That's an idea. Whereas if you're going to write a novel it varies, you don't always know what it's about when you get started.

Antonio: How long have you been teaching?

Alan Cheuse: I've been teaching on and off for thirty years. I started teaching before I started writing. I taught at a high school in Mexico, that was the first teaching job I ever had. Then I started teaching college. I taught up in Vermont.

Antonio: Do you teach poetry?

Alan Cheuse: I hardly ever teach poetry. Mostly I teach fiction. But I love poetry. Do you like poetry?

Yasmine, Sitembile, Antonio, Larry: Yes.

Alan Cheuse: So I was teaching up in Vermont for a while, for almost ten years. And then I left there and started writing full time. After that, maybe half a dozen years, I started teaching again. It's difficult to write and teach at the same time. Now I've got a good arrangement. You know, you struggle real hard, and if you stay in it long enough, you get to a place where it's a little bit easier than when you started.

Sitembile: Did they ask you to be on the radio, or did you just want to be?

Alan Cheuse: Both. But they asked me to start, and I got to like it. It's the only fun I have. Until I met you guys.

Antonio: When you were a kid, were you interested in storytelling?

Alan Cheuse: I used to make up stories. I used to be a big liar when I was a kid. And people believed them, so I was convincing, right? I remember when I was in eighth grade, I had an after-school job working in a ladies' clothing store, working in the basement, stocker, opening up cartons and stuffing cartons on the shelves. And they told me to do some big job or other, and I forgot to do it, and they said, "Why didn't you get this done?" And I started making up some story about, "Oh, I got a call from the delivery guy, and he told me to come on up..." So that's how I knew I could make stuff up. It's not the best way to start.

But reading is mostly what I did. I got caught up in reading. I think that helps you start in becoming a writer.

Antonio: What books did you like to read?

Alan Cheuse: When I first started, I read a lot of sea stories, an English writer named C.S. Forrester, who writes a lot of sea adventure stories— nineteenth century British Navy, I started reading that. You know, I grew up in a factory town. We were on water, were on Raritan Bay, so I was interested in water, but you couldn't get further away from the British Navy than the way I grew up. But I just got caught up in it. Then I read a lot of science fiction stories, so that's the first stuff I started reading.

Yasmine: Do you have any advice for writers who are just starting out?

Teacher Feature

On March 21, 2001, Charles Hart Middle School held its first-ever Student vs. Faculty Poetry Slam. Math, science, English, and social studies teachers pulled together under the captainship of Principal Lee E. Epps for secret after-school practice sessions. Twelve teachers gave it their all, only to be narrowly defeated by a seasoned, semi-professional student team. Some of the faculty's work is represented here.

Electric Dreams

When the day ends
I will be dreaming in electric blue,
Far from my teaching blues
Don't tell me to stop.
I'm leaping across the constellations
Hoping for the snow day that never comes.

When the day ends
The other me will unravel
Like a yo-yo
Fast and sleek
SWOOOOOOSHHH
Drowning in my sweet freedom.

When the day ends
I will slither into eternity
Where my sorrows are misty memories
My memories, dreams
My dreams, reality
And my reality: heavenly.

And I will flutter like a baby bird's wings on first flight
And I will flutter like an Olympic swimmer about to take the lead
And I will flutter like a leaf in the middle of El Nino

When the day ends I will travel to distant lands
Blissful as the newlywed couple,
Carefree as yesterday's wind

When the day ends I will be in a cafe
Lingering like the common cold
With a bottomless cup of iced coffee
Ingesting the uninterrupted silence

Teacher Feature

And I will swirl thoughts and ideas like vanilla and chocolate ice cream.
And I will swirl across the dance floor, four steps at a time.
And I will swirl the wonder of me and the mystique of the other, unraveling, me

It will be 3:30pm
The old brick building fades in my rearview mirror
The radio captures me
The crosswind sweeps through my thin hair
And I let go.
The highway prepares for me
My own true glory breathes.

Ms. Molly Buckley



Principal Lee E. Epps

Autobiography

I am the South, for my roots are Southern
I have memories of Mama, which I carry daily
saying Use Your Head
Treat others as you want to be treated
Be smart
Birds of a feather flock together
Be independent
I am A&T State University,
George Washington University, NBC TV
I am daughter, mother, father, teacher
student, administrator
I love
I am loved
I care.

Principal Lee E. Epps

Elevate Your Mind

As I woke this morning to the rain spattering like some stranger rattling my window pane
I thought to myself...
How do I show them so that they may see and know that the elevation of their minds to a higher
plane is necessary for their survival in this domain...

How to tell them the reality of their situation as it relates to the rest of the world

Elevate your mind
For you'll find in time
That your current state of mind
May be a waste of time

Angry bodies
Fuming mouths
Flaring nostrils
Furious fists
Irate eyes
Seething minds

Rage because the world you know is not your own
u didn't create the raw edged world u live in
u just came to be
some wanted, comforted and cared for
others not
and so your rage from the insanity of the reality you know seeps and creeps into your collective
brown body and rears its ugly head evening news "This just in, a man/woman/child was found
stabbed/shot/beaten to death in Southeast" Trying to show the rest of the world that shhhh...the
darkies/coloreds/Negroes/Afro-Americans/African-Americans, BLACK PEOPLE are out of control
again and can not be trusted with their own thoughts, lives, responsibilities, much less the lives of
someone else
how many non-chocolate people do you see daily?
"reality" for someone else, to give them a way to believe that no...

That kind of violence won't happen in "our" lily-white, full-functioning nuclear family, I don't have a baby
mamma,
both parents are "happy", employed and we are economically sound, kind of communities

that's just those minority children who live on welfare and have 4 and 5 brothers and sisters, smoke
weed all the time, have no parents and don't know anything beyond what they hear on the radio

TeaCHer FeaTure

and see on BET...

the selective amnesia that our collective society suffers from is sickening, have they forgotten Columbine so quickly? They can't keep running away from the Pharcyde of the truth that shall set you free but leave you lying in the ruins of the lie that gave you life...

President George W. 'cocaine and DUI' Bush had daddy pay his way out of Yale University...but somehow the media that's so quick to point out the brown flaws in the American fabric conveniently forgot about that...

But we'll all remember Jesse Jackson's love child

And you think, so what,
How does all of that get back to me
Cause that's all life is about right, me myself and I

Ludicris—y'all know it's actually a word?
Ludicrous meaning foolish full of...
"Is that your chick? Does she suffer from Ice-It is?"

Na...
"Chicken chicken...chicken head"
"Give me a project chick, Give me a hoodrat trick"

But wait...
"I gotta bizounce
I can't take this—no more"

Na, this one!
"Honey came in and she caught me red handed
Creepin' with the girl next door"

"It's plain to see
girl I just be playin wit ya
girl you and me, see it's just puppy love"

Y'all may be laughing now,
realize that most of you know all the words to these songs
but can't do the reading and writing or the math or science that would get you

TEACHER FEATURE

off the evening news

Education that would keep you from being just another chocolate child on the street with nothing...

Education that would get you above and beyond your current state of mind...

Education that would prove to the rest of the world what I know,

bright and intelligent children live and breathe in our community but their anger and their negativity keep them from the world...

as the children of your own destiny, you can't afford to keep up the insanity and the madness that brought you into this world...you have to move beyond it...

because if you

Elevate your mind

You'll find in time

That your current state of mind

May be a waste of time

Ms. Ticora V. Jones

My Star

One plus one equals three in an abstract way

My elders always spoke of love at first sight

and the stars aligning right

that was something that never settled with me quite

Love without knowing someone, love without touch, love without language, love without time

Well it just didn't seem like love

And stars were just things far away for only you to see

Stars weren't things that were aligned with us on earth

My view quickly changed when God made me the receiver

Love at first sight was a blessing I will ever be grateful for

Those bright eyes, that soft curly hair, that copper skin so smooth, those hands soft to the touch and the voice of an angel.

I couldn't believe I was aligned with the stars

Some go a life awaiting such a blessing and nothing is given

Some spare no expense to receive such a blessing and nothing is given

Some are given the gift only to abuse it or not appreciate it and there it is wasted

But my love for this person would be done right

I will give, guide, love, nurture, support, encourage, laughter, hugs and kisses.

The gift from the sky was sent to the rightful owner

And with it my baby girl Ariel and I will grow

Grow together

Ms. Erica Booker

Teacher Feature

Who Am I?

A stone that the builders rejected
Betrayed with a kiss
Scorched
A sheep taken to slaughter, yet uttering not a word
Who am I?

The second Adam
The Rose of Sharon
The Lily of the Valley
The Mighty Prince of Peace
Wonderful, counselor
Who am I?

The bright morning star
The way, the truth and the light
The bread of life
Salt
The true vine
Who am I?

A strong tower
Petra, the rock
Thura, the door, entrance to abundant life
The one in whom souls are anchored
Who am I?

A bridegroom, soon to return for his bride
Abba, Father
Alpha and Omega
Who am I?

I AM, THE GREAT I AM!

Ms. Kharolynne Jackson



Ms. Felecia Motley

"Hart"beat of Southeast

(Alma Mater for Hart Middle School)

Heart to Hart,
Our home away from home.
Arm in arm,
Depending on everyone.
Brother needs brother,
And sister needs sister.
A Hart family we have become.

We take with us precious memories.
We dedicate our loyalties.
You taught us to do our best.
And trust God to do the rest.
Soaring us high,
Hart Jets to reach the sky.

Precious memories of,
Hart Middle School,
You are the "Hart"beat of Southeast.

Mrs. Felecia Motley

TEACHER FEATURE

Is the mike on?

Is the mike on?
Is— the— mike— on?
Then listen. You need to hear me.
You need to hear my lesson.
I am not your homie!
I am not your homie!
Read my lips.
I am your teacher,
I am your teacher
I will inspire you, encourage you, influence you,
Yes, chastise you when you're wrong.
I will tell you, tell you; tell you, you can achieve.
I will make you believe in yourself, yourself,
Your black self, your multi-cultural self.
You are great.
Possessing, potential, perpetuating,

A diamond in the rough, seated in class,
Attitudes, bucking all the rules and avoiding
Every chance the unrelenting polishings and the
Classic attacks of subjects and predicates—
Forced.
And the cell phone calls, to parents with breaking
News of homework you missed. The Rubrics,
Performance Standards, and Progress Reports.
All in a day's work. You are the future, you are
Our leaders. I will not let you embrace the idea
Of settling for less. I care about you.

So, calmly, clearly, I repeat, and re-iterate, I
Am not your homie, I am not your homie,
I am your teacher.

Ms. Mary Johnson



Ms. Mary Johnson

KERRY DANNER-MCDONALD

Pruning

tempting to forgo this
grueling exercise
when coldness
will kill fading blooms
and brown wrinkled leaves
and time will force new growth

but thorns and hips,
dry cracked petals
half eaten leaves
and dark black spots
beckon for my shears
and I in gyrating madness,
reach into the inner sanctuary,
protected by nonproducing canes
that guard the roots indefinitely
if not chopped back.

ANDY FOGLE

Jurisdiction

tonight I look at the stars
and then to my hand

some of these lines I was born with
and some I've picked up along the way

across the street magnified
the quick kiss of two people

while the sound of a grain of sand
being dropped into water

is amplified and echoing
above the city

and it may be true
that sight is between the eyes

sound the ears
touch the hands

and has nothing to do
with me

but at root something inside me
has always declared

recognize and return
all that is around you

like the ring around a planet
the energy of a secret

do what you're gonna do
what you can

do what you got
right

I'll tell you
with all I am

I Remember

I remember when the breeze hit my face
like an absent object
I remember when that voice became deep
and your expression became touched
I remember the DC bands playing
and black people flooded the streets
I remember the tenderness
of lips placed gently on my cheek
I remember 7 grades all the same
I remember my best friend
who I thought would never fail me yet
I remember playing my first game of cards and guess?
I remember when truck sirens
and bloodied hands and tears ran down
I remember she said "I love you"
and my smile dropped
fell to the ground

Lorice Young

Behind the Wall of Sleep

Behind the wall of sleep
there are unfinished dreams with things
you wanted to do after.

Behind the wall of sleep
there are dreams that may come true.

Behind the wall of dreams
there are fairytales of your life.

Behind the wall of sleep there's nightmares
with ugly faces which you do not want to have.

What is behind the wall of sleep?
Are there dreams, fairytales, or nightmares?

Jewel Smith

The Beast In Me

The beast in me is beauty.
He never gets sleepy,
he makes everybody creepy.
The beast in me
is like a bull running for anything red.
The beast in me makes me cry sometimes.
The beast in me makes me feel like an outsider.
The beast in me makes me want to kill.
The beast in me makes me want to die
at the blink of an eye.

Jeremy Moorer



Night City

It's always quiet,
it's always dark.
But the people were never home,
they were always out gambling.
Children are always getting caught in the area.
It was so dark even the gangsters
and drug dealers won't go into the night city.
There was something bad about that city.

Donte Franklin

Crystal Flame

Crystal Flame
It's not myself to blame; it's just sweet water pains
As blood seasons bring up reasons of soft bruises
of yesterday
The orange clouds pass by with a warm red sea.
Never narrow,
but I forget as seasons-sandwiched roads
as time sways and makes me scream
burnt with smoke blows. Dance alone
as you hear my shadow song.
Burnt dog hear my crystal flame
as I call upon a rainy moon.

Victoria McRae

Oily Night

Oily night so tight,
but not so right to fight tonight.
I wish I had more light
especially in my room
as the broom and the dust pan
start to fight.
Sometimes my broom moves around
and always loses against the dust pan
and my mop always cleans up after them
because they are so oily.
The oil is so slippery that when I wake up
the floor over by the door
is so shiny
and when the mop says
"I'm not cleaning it up"
I will have to clean it up
before my little brother Deal
comes right in and might fall
but nevertheless they will keep fighting
and I am really blessed
to see and hear all of this.

Marcus Campbell

Sea Which

I took a dive in the sea
There I saw the sea which
Alone I danced, scattered with blood,
Time is stretching.
Help, help I cried this witch got me,
I cried in my new dancing suit.

The forgotten sea, which I laid upon
Crying, crying under a red light,
Sobs swaying.

Keyona Lewis

Danga Kee Ou

Dange Keep Ou of the 30s.
Boy-men are breaking in Harlem
Worn-out boards, worn-out fighting,
trying to get in a building.
Grandmothers scream come-up, come-here
Hands sticking out of windows.
It is a muddy, smoky-gray past.
Yesterday, the street was white
But now, cloudy and bloody, saying
danger danger
Kids dream of stage performances, their memories
blue-back and yelling come' on future.

Kala Taylor

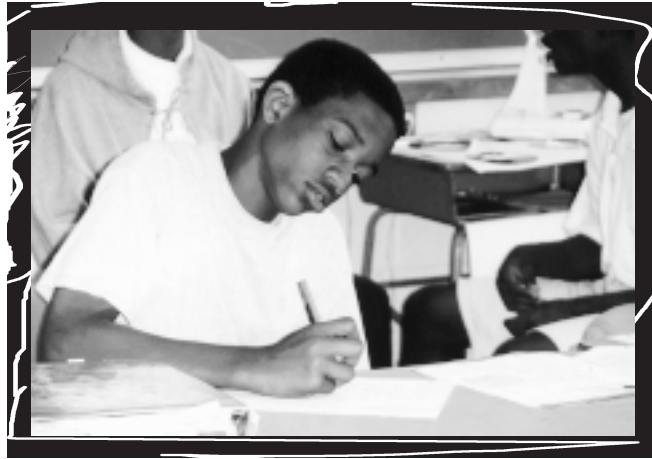
Deep Memories

Deep memories, take me
as far back as I can
remember, to
my conscience my mind
will surrender.

Deep memories take me
back, back to when I jumped
off the 2nd floor balcony,
take me back to when
I got the most gifts
on a Christmas, take me back,
back, back.

Deep, deeper, deepest,
farther back
into the pool of memories,
I can remember my 14th birthday,
I can remember when I had
my first and last fight.

Jamar Myrick



Kevin Tindle

Past

Remember that day when
I was forced into this world.
As I was passed from
each set of freezing cold hands
when bumblebees set upon
my smooth yet torn skin, slowly entering
stingers into my paws.
How winter came
and snow fell upon my nose and melted,
and as summer approached
it all came back to me.
How sparkling fireflies glided across the sky.
In the grass while the fast jackrabbits laughed,
showed me just as much. I enjoyed my dad.
Walking in the crowd, hearing everything wild,
while smooth music played in the still of the night.

Shari Jackson

Death

Not too long ago I was only ten years old
and I did not know my grandmother had died.
I was in the living room and I was getting hungry
and I went in my grandmother's room
and I said "Grandmom, Grandmom"
and she did not get up
and so I shook her and she did not wake up.
I was scared and I had run out
and called my mother
and she heard me close,
I said "Mom, is Grandmom going to be ok?"
She said "I am not sure"
and we went to the hospital
and they were doing an operation on her.
I said "What are they doing to her?"
My mother said "It's ok"
and 4 hours later they said my grandmother had died.
It was so hard to hear, I was crying so hard,
my eyes were red for a week,
and when everybody went up to give her something
I gave her a kiss on her cheek
and that was all about my scared life at the time.

Markeisha Simms

Justice Tomorrow

Forgive the faceless yesterday
Celebrate spring, loving, struggling
Struggling to reach past the mirror of hell.
I am a survivor, I am going to make it.
Remember the death of my child
The inequality of yellow teeth slaves
I'm a survivor,
I'm going to make it
Cause justice is tomorrow

Andrea Cooper

A Tree Within

A tree within another tree
A tree within a child
A tree within a tree within a child
A tree within you
A tree within another tree within a child within you.

A tree within them
A tree within another tree within a child
within you within them.

A tree within all
A tree within another tree within a child
within you within them all.

A tree within Heaven
A tree within another tree within a child
within you within them within all within Heaven

A tree within God
A tree within another tree within a
child within you within them within
all within Heaven within God.

Aaron Ferguson



Gun

Gun I hate you
Gun I can hear you
Gun you are a murderer
Get get out of people's lives
Gun can't you see I'm only me
Gun you are not likeable
Gun you kill people
Gun be gone
Gun just stay away from me

Tashell Burnett

All Souls

All souls are big
All souls are tall
Did you ever see anyone with eight souls
Well let me tell you about my eight souls
1 is smart 2 is crazy 3 is funny
4 cries when the sunset goes away
5 loves cheesecake (that soul is my favorite)
6 loves my Granny very very much
7 really likes God
8 loves to go shopping
Those are the names of my souls

Paris Koonce



The Lost Father

My lost father is gone
My lost father has died
My lost father ran away
My lost father misses me
My lost father left me
My lost father is missing
The cops are looking for my lost father

Timothy Rawls

Step 1

Stretch the candle
so the road can have lights.

Scatter the blood
so the mood will be red.

Aleisha Hunter

Cloud Busting

Screaming clouds with
a burnt crispy moon that lights
warm shadows.
Walking orange dogs notice clouds
Busting and screaming suits with dancing clouds
Where the scattered bus stands alone
Scalding burnt oranges scattered on a rainy beach,
Cloud busting.

Ashlee Owens



Lindsey Herbert

Vowels!

A is a half-diamond, scarred in the middle

E is the devil's nightstick, prodding his slaves

I is a mad eye with an eyebrow

O is a racetrack that never ends

U is a side of a mouth with no teeth

Milton Douglas

The 30s

This building is smoky-gray mud
with blood bricks of the past,
sleeping windows of the future.
It is worn out
because it's twirling with rat-boys and girls,
dreaming of not being in danger.

Milton Douglas

Untitled

A horseshoe ready to be ringed around a pole
A tree branch falling to the ground
One sideways noise blower ready to be blown
An eye that is wide open
An axe waiting to chop some wood
A hula-hoop in the air
Squished and squeezing through a tall glass

Ashlee Owens



Even In the City

Even in the city, we have a lot of poor people,
a lot of people who beg for stuff
and a lot of people who are thinking
about what they want to do in life.
In the future I can see things are going to work out just fine
I can see that I will go to college
and be what I can be.
Even in the city we have people who want to do stuff
but they are not able to.
Even in the city we have good things.

Dominic Willis

Poetry

A, red licorice corset,
tongue of flavor
I'll tell you my secret

Tennis of lightness, V
tender legs opening upside down with joy
E, a round earth spinning,
green memories, O
a wide, vivid world.

Victoria McRae

What About Me?

In a burning room with a cluttered dresser,
I am in a mirror, saying what about me?
day-dreaming into the future,
my memory twirling,
saying what about me.
In a building with a ceiling worn-out
from performing, saying what about me.
In a mirror, in a burning room, with a cluttered dresser
a white cloudy day, yelling what about me?

Ashlee Owens



Nature writers at the Girls' Retreat

Letters

M Wave moving swiftly in the ocean
 The fall of death spikes piercing your back
 A peace sign

L My leg
 The way to southeast

O My face when something is wrong
 The sun smiling down on me

Aleisha Hunter

The Other Me

I am a winter cloud dancing on a narrow road
I am a red leaf in winter
I am a bruised dog running a soft road
I am a turkey sandwich being eaten by a moon dog
I am a time switch sending people back in time
I take everything I said back—
I am just the other me.

Michael Young

The Sea and the Sky

Warm rain falls on the smooth sea
as the red moon's light shines. The red-orange
daisy shadow is screaming for light.
Burnt winter is near.
It warms closer like a candle burning
a hole in a dancing cloud giving off light.

The seasons are changing and the clouds dance on.
A scarred red leaf is scattered like blood falling from
the sky. Orange and red light shies from the sky. Why?
Spring shadows are back.

Damien Boston



It's All Too Much

Time is a narrow way that's soft and soothes
a shadow that scatters everywhere and crawls behind you.

Lights switch on a car that goes down the road
that stretches away from the heat and waves.

A season offers no date of when a season could end.

In spring daisies start to grow.

In summer there's no such thing as rainy days.

In fall fake blood scatters all over the wall.

On a cloudy day I was riding my red bike.
On a warm day, I was burning up.

Darris Taylor

Better Things

I love the sweet water scattering all over the yucky mud
so that I can play in it.

During the winter season I watched the scattered sea.

Dressed in my red suit, I drove in my red car
to that orange bench where I forget time is late.

There was no food, so I cut myself and drank
red blood and burnt leaves. Then, I prayed to God
and danced alone on that narrow road.

Anthony Anderson



Monique Covington

Sweetest Goodbye

I told you goodbye when I was by the daisy road
with my shadow bike inside my blood suit.

When I saw the rainy light

I started to think about the winter leaves and a table dance.

Then I picked up a red orange, and saw a red car
and said my sweetest goodbye.

Nathaniel Nails

Ain't That Unusual

Time and time again doesn't persuade me
narrow thoughts

a crying body soothes my heart and soul
as bright as an orange.

A dark burnt dog sweet like a daisy

Never says never—

a lovely red leaf,

a screaming car down a street

a bus driving in winter

Daniel Green

Me

Each of my hairs is worth hundreds of dollars
Each walk I take is picture perfect
I gave the moon to God and he gave me the stars back
My life controls all life
I have the earth in my hands

Ebony Love



Actions of an Unloving Person

Names of people fade away in my mind.
Yesterday is a faceless paper for tomorrow's justice,
Struggling to remember the life of the fake boy telling
you lies of a love that is buried in the ground.
Yellow rays of light that fades away telling the truth of that fake boy.

Ebony Love

Blue Moon

One hallow night I stood at the blue moon
when something dared me to fly to the moon
so I lit a flare like a shooting star and flew to
the moon.

Anthony Anderson

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HARTWORKS

Clockwise from top: Larry Robertson, Antonio Ashford, Dominic Garvin, James Thomas