

The Charles Hart Middle School Literary Magazine



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Cover, l-r: Marcus Johnson, James Saunders, Khalil Jones, Deon Stover, Sequan Wilson, Marcus Barnes Above, l-r: Marcus Barnes, Lamara Brooks, Marcus Johnson, Kiana Murphy, Steven Reed, Bernice Caldwell, Renita Williams, Monae Smith, Nancy Schwalb, DarVel Suggs, Devon Hudson, Christy Gill, Kirk Murphy

# INTRODUCTION



elcome to the 27th edition of *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 eighth 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 2009 edition of *Poet's Market* recognizes *hArtworks* as "an outstanding example of what a literary journal can be (for anyone of any age)."

As another exhilarating school year draws to a close, we have many new triumphs to celebrate. Our students have written and performed their ninth original adaptation of a classical drama, this year updating Christopher Marlowe's "Dr. Faustus" to create "Soul for Sale." Our young poets have again excelled in writing competitions, fielding more winners than any other middle or high school, public or private, in the Parkmont Poetry Contest. Congratulations to Parkmont winners Marcus Barnes, Lamara Brooks, Bernice Caldwell, Davon Ford, Devon Hudson, Khalil Jones, Damon Kee, Nichell Kee, Shawntay Kent, Kiana Murphy, Kirk Murphy, Khadijah Rashad, Steven Reed, Monae Smith, DarVel Suggs, Renita Williams, and Sequan Wilson. Congratulations also to Imani Hyman, who won first place in Youth Poetry in the Larry Neal Awards, and to Kierra Parks and Jason Goolsby, who earned second place and honorable mention in the same category. Also in the Larry Neal Awards, Deamonte Gibson won first place in Youth Essay, and James Saunders won second place in Teen Poetry. And in the Junior League Teen Poetry Competition, Marquise Lewis was the top eighth grade poet in the city. Our students have read their work at many venues this year, including Busboys and Poets, the American Poetry Museum, Barnes and Noble, the Smithsonian Museum of American History, and the Afrocentric Books Expo at the Mall at Prince Georges. To top it all off, they have now published their 27th issue of hArtworks!

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 Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation, Children's Fund of Metropolitan Washington, Community Foundation for the National Capital Region, D.C. Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation Project My Time, John Edward Fowler Foundation, Harman Family Foundation, International Monetary Fund, Lucas-Spindletop Foundation, Mattel Children's Foundation, Marpat Foundation, Moran Family Fund, Meyer Foundation, New York Avenue Foundation, Prince Charitable Trusts, Luther Replogle Foundation, Spring Creek Foundation, Hattie M. Strong Foundation, The Tom Lane Fund, Wachovia Foundation, Wendling Foundation, Weissberg Foundation, The World Bank, Anonymous, Michael Joy and TSCJoy/Monterey, LLC, Sarah Booth and Bloomberg L.P., Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, GO! Creative, LLC, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Arena Stage, the Shakespeare Theatre, Woolly Mammoth Theater, McGuire Williams Associates, Joyce Page and Ms. Printing, Tollefson & Gustini Investment Management, our friends at Popeye's on Malcolm X Avenue, George and Lenore Cohen, Nancy Folger, Janet Horgen, Sharis and Thorn Pozen, Clyde E. Shorey, Richard Thompson, and Ladislaus von Hoffmann.

Our interns, Abbey Chung, Bernitta Johnson, and James Saunders also deserve our thanks for giving so much of their time and energy to our after-school Writing Club, as do our volunteers, Helen Hooper and Shannon Rampe.

Special thanks for the hard work and dedication of the D.C. Creative Writing Workshop Board of Directors: Mary Ann Brownlow, Bernie Horn, Michael Joy, Joan Kennan, Aileen Morse, Bill Newlin, Dr. Pat Papero, Raina Rose Tagle, Nancy Schwalb, and Rosetta Thurman.

We would also like to thank the following administrators, teachers, and staff who are our partners in this endeavor: Principal Billy Kearny; Assistant Principals Ms. Crystal Cartwright, Lisa Faulkner-Jones, and Mr. Aaran Lurry; Ms. Elizabeth Davis, Mr. Shawn Fedinez, Ms. Gloria Fergusson, Ms. Christine Gill, Mr. Jeff Griswold, Ms. Josie Johnson, Ms. Eleanor Seale, Ms. Sherry Dailey, and Ms. Maevern Williams.

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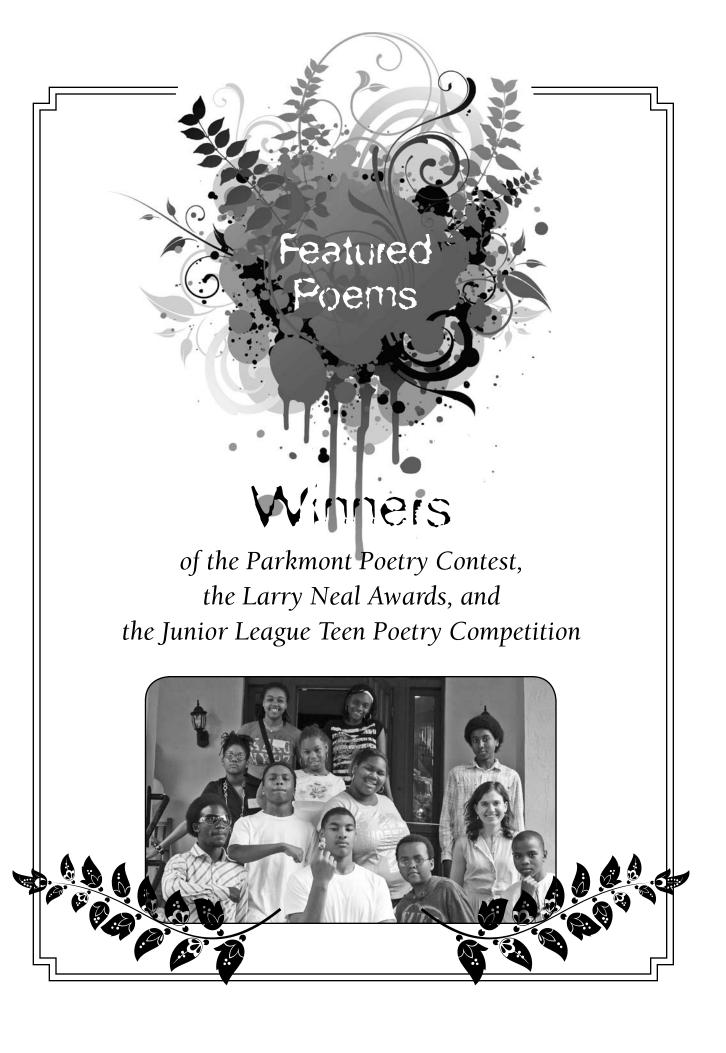
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# My Resolution

I am slithering into a new beginning:
Not completely there,
But finding my way.
Promise ahead and tragedy is behind me
Divided by a brick wall that must come down.
Like a wrecking ball to an old building,
Fire to fire causes nothing but more fire.
I am slithering into a new beginning
So I crawl away from the past.

Marquise Lewis

## Happy New Year

I crawl into the new year
Expecting a change
But not really seeing a difference
I can already see the clouds rolling in
Struggle hits me like lightning
Burning my shyness and bringing with it a rain of agony

Last year was just as bad Maybe a bit calmer, but still the usual Thunderstorm of pain Flashes of confusion Thoughts, questions come storming in How can a heart beat if it's broken?

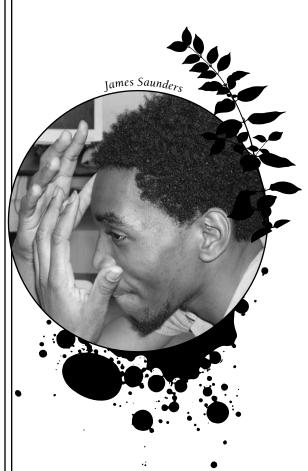
That year I thought I went flying into it This year I peeked in on the cold month And went crashing down

The year just started
Already I'm trapped by guilt
Burning a hole in my mind
How long shall I be trapped?
I'll wait until it passes, just like every year

Nichell Kee







# The Poem of the Widow's Son

Dat pretty lightskin lady wit da pretty butta skin and da ruby red fingerwaves,

singin' dat song she always be singin'. It's just her voice makin' love with the piano. I be listenin'.

I see it goin' down in a smoky gray and black room. It smell like cigarettes and Stetson and polished bullets. Nobody's talking. Dey just payin' close, close attention to the love scene. All these dudes got on suits and hats wit da feathers on 'em. And dey listenin' jus like I be.

She be singin' "Love don't live here anymore." The piano always got the right thing to say back to her licorice lyrics. They get along so good. It's like one of the silly fairy tales we read about in skool, dat ain't real.

And if they is real, then it ain't for long cuz they always die.
Fairy tales die and leave you in a nightmare. Like momma when daddy died.

Daddy gone and you know he ain't comin' back. Now all momma got is that piano and me to love.

James Saunders



# My Name

In the morning, my name feels deadly
In the afternoon, my name feels real
Outside, my name feels loud
At the end of school, my name feels happy
The next day, my name feels good
Going to school, my name feels magic.

When my friends call me, when I write my name, it feels secret.

My name feels funny when I make my friends laugh.

My name feels like music

When people say it.

Lamara Brooks

#### To Get Water

A poem is a flame of fire that thrashes in the forest that makes pain come and forces people to get out while other people are getting wet. A poem knits rhymes together and takes pride in their work, that forces other kids to know what to do. that freezes kids' brains and curls their hair. A poem is a squirmy letter that writes what you think and calms down what they think, something that makes you feel dread to read it, that makes you feel disgust, because they have to.

Kierra Parks



Lamara Brooks



# The Day that You Are Going to Have

Forget the pool Forget the wind And don't forget To pay your rent It's a holiday, have Some joy, forget About the squeak Just picture food Inside your head Don't forget to toss the salad Don't forget about Pie crust, just Picture the moon Light and enjoy The bread and picture The plate you're Going to have.

Khadijah Rashad

### The True Definition of a Man

I was told the true definition of a man was never cry, work till you die, got to provide, always be the rock for my family and protect them by all means, a poem gives me the chance to express what I want, I see about what a man's to be, but I know a true man should be able to express his feelings mentally, and I don't see anything wrong with men showing feelings physically. A poem helps me get over break-ups and sorrow, also brings me hope when I dread for tomorrow.





### Get Your Elbow Off The Table

I was raised by get your elbow off the table, don't never say you're not able, get dat money real faithful type of family.

Always on my back, never let me slack, they always stay packed
Do anything for me, loved me to the max type family.

Get your butt in this house fore I tear you up. Always drinking out the juice cup type family.

Tore up off the goose put a lil cranberry in it to give it a boost, come over here and give Grandma a smooch type family.

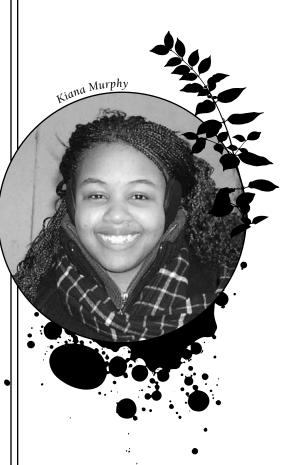
Hand me the remote right here beside me, move out of the way of the TV I can't see type family.

Come here boy, then smack me in my head, I know you ain't wet your bed, even though I did, I'd tell her it's water instead type family.

You better do your homework beat with the belt had me crying like water type family.

Davon Ford





# Sleeveless Imagination

Falling of the leaves
Frostbite of words
Defrosting of an empty mind

Bitter blackened Footprints Engraved beneath the soggy foundation

Heartburn erupting Internal hail Mixture of emotion

Temperature changes
Adjusting to the hypothermia
Of a hand losing feeling

Spite inside an abandoned house The hinges behind a frozen door Lost in thought, broken emptiness

Boneless structure
Defines the atmosphere
Of a chill sneaking into the anger

Decay, fire beyond unreasonable Caressing the invisible flakes No longer in original form

Pale Chapped lips Fingertips numb

Shivering among the sudden transactions Wind watering the naked eye Warmth under the extra clothing

Winter freezes a summer mind Collapsing warm thoughts, destroying crimson love

Kiana Murphy



### From One to Another

My father's eyes would define mine like a silent voice yelling in your indescribable thoughts.

My prayers are as similar as my mom's gift to god.

Like the son of an unloving dad, praying for his dad to return.

My thankfulness is what my dad and mom combine.

Like the sourness a lemon brings but can return with sweetness and lusciousness of lemon aid.

Kirk Murphy

# I Am Not For School

Long lessons trying to stay awake day dreams forever etched in my head thinking of the fun I had the day before party it was great but my shadow looks so cool a creation of the sun my half-baked brain can't process fast enough I'm not for school the bell has wings when it rings I guess I'm done.





# The Time Is Right to Make

The time is right to make
The world a better place for
kids also adults to live better
all the colorblind people could see
bright as day

The time is right to care for people who are disabled and not laugh. Toss up the hating and become happy.

The moon speaks louder than the sun my heart beats more than it's supposed to when I see someone in stress. I always try to give an extra hand.

The time is right to warm the frostbitten fingers from cold snow. I plant my seeds into the clouds above to make me a better person.

Renita Williams

#### 1Be

I be of DC
I be a block from Eastover
I be having glitter in my hair
I be goofy all the time
I be happy all the time
I be cute a lot
I be having nothing to do
playing with my puppy I be
eating popcorn on the couch I be
Wingate all the time. I be
school I be all the fun times
I be loving my family I be
I be happy because the world makes
me and I be





#### lam

I am capable of accomplishing all my goals,

I am killing souls with blank words,

tarnishing promiscuous dreams.

My gaze is slowly observing an endless soul tearing away from an unkempt body.

I believe in conquering homelands, tranquility overflowing, souls and spiral windows.

Monae Smith



# Unforgettable

The sky becomes obscene,
Fading to a sudden green,
Hearts get heavy, along with their breath,
Bodies shiver, but they keep it to themselves,
Visible air thrives for attention,
And chills deserve an honorable mention,
Feet sing an unforgettable but all the same tune,
"Don't forget to buy boots for me soon,"
Thin jackets fade, replaced by something insulated
Or is it coats that are fabricated?
Something I really haven't debated
Unlikely tunes start to sound
Like "Silent Night" and "Santa's Coming to Town"
The endings of our summers of discontent
This winter, the snow shows new moments well spent.

Sequan Wilson



#### Photo

Picture you in the background And me in the front Eyes older than a wooden table Face looks like a tinted mask

Devon Hudson

# My Winter Experience

The days are being broken
Each one getting shorter
I hesitate to go outside
Below 30 degrees it is
I look on the faces of children
Outside freezing
Their faces are ivory
Just like the snow
Coming inside to taste
The bittersweet tea
The warmth sends comfort
All through your bones

DarVel Suggs





#### His son

but when he had passed away I was mad because he was the only person that really cared about me because he always had love for me and I had love for him And he really looked out after me so I would not get lost and I love him because of the things that he did for me and he once said that if he dies or leaves my side he would pass down his favorite things in the world And he gave me a shirt and he called it the shirt of forgiveness and he also gave me a ring that he loved and always wore and he called it the ring of love and happiness and he gave those two items to me keep if he passed but he also said that the shirt and the ring represent you and me and my father said that he would hate to lose me because I was his one and also only caring, loving son.

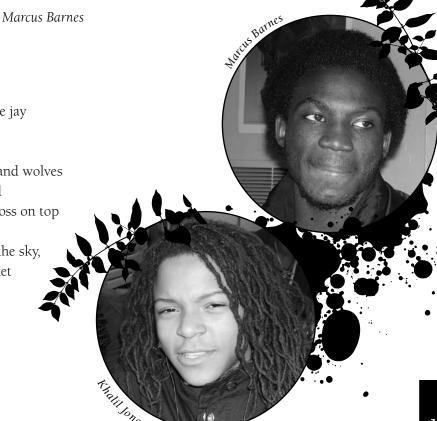
Well, I wish that my father was living right now

because I really miss him very much

### Random

Three red robins, one blue jay flying down the street
As I see them fly
I see the trees, I see deer and wolves
I walk down the road and
I see the church with a cross on top and when I look up
I see the lions playing in the sky, the rectangle-shaped casket
Of all my dead poems

Khalil Jones







# Poetic Autobiography

And even though I remember the slurred, soothing words of my mother while she bathed me. I failed to understand the fact that she had an addiction to a thing she called grey goose, the thing that made her feel good when no one else was there to put the broken pieces together, and when her bottle was emptied of her sinful concoction

I was there to accept her for her, and give her the love she had sought from the lover that only corrupted her, but your biographers never understand.

Shawntay Kent



# Profile

Fall through the sea I can't see you through me But I will fall from the sky So you can be with me

Yellow brick road Feels so cold Your heart is so red and bold If I don't feel it, it will grow mold

Your voice is so gooey and sweet Like it came right off a honeybee Blue and purple sky Tears fall from my eye As my evil side waves bye

The angel you are, halo over your head As you lie in the white, comfy bed Dreaming about ladybugs flying away

While in your smile, gasp, and growl
You're always on the prowl
Knock, knock at the door, wanting more
I love the way you explore

The way you speak
Don't miss a beat
Whole time the poem is about me

Renita Williams



# A Vivid Memory

Crimson eyes Body language foreshadowing An unheard secret.

Rain, Creates saltwater A taste that flows...

I tried to tell her:
This is all a dream,
I wish I could have been there.
You're defeated, so am I.
Down beneath the depths of my empty heart,
I feel your pain.

But my scattered words
Created confusion
I choked on the sound of the heart I could hear cracking,
With every part of truth, a lie in my mind.

Chocolate skin, bright smile, eyes so amazing A sight I adore seeing,
As much as fate wishes upon me.

Unexpected departure, From our isolated place I feel the heartburn once again

The sun blinds me, I feel as though I've failed her.

Kiana Murphy

# Winter Sky (A rant)

Why can't this opaque purgatory that is the deity exist as my flame? i will focus assiduously on the black, desolate heart of this flame.

i will chant frantically until I acquire the divine powers of a yogi. i will worship you day & night.

But you deny me.

When humanity complained & moaned, when you spoke to us & the frigid wind stirred, i listened, recognized and loved your power.

But you don't care.

The imperceptibly vast, the uncontrollable unbuckled, unfastened, RAW force that is the sky...Doesn't mess with me.

Forever we've been insignificant dots on a line plot, submissive to your reign. And i've never wanted it any other way.

But you have no sym- nor em- pathy for my dreams. You just tell me to endure and die.

i guess around this time of year you're too gritty, too guttere, and i'm still chasing the remnants of summer.

James Saunders





I saw the unspeakable: Without a warning, I was reduced to tears, Not a dry eye was found, no eye was clear. I saw the unpredictable, Your heart was responding, barely, But I heard no voice, was I somber? Very. I heard the unthinkable, Over which no one had power, You'll leave us within 2 hours. I listened to the unnamable Psalms and spoken words collide, But I'm still dead inside, Why am I not yet over it? I won't feel happiness yet, Until I face the inevitable facts. I'll never be over it because light won't come back. The apple of my eye has been spoiled rotten, In my heart, you'll never be forgotten, Now, my voice'll never be heard, So, I'll close this, without saying a \_\_\_\_

Sequan Wilson



# Confined to the Cracks in the Sidewalk

You have the right to remain silent, locked behind the hate trap the cuffs of steel cemented on the mind.

Pushed up against the riches no longer an experience I want to capture High-fashioned architecture, high-priced chandeliers

The rags of my life, manipulating the patches of clothing that bring me together pronunciation of cruelty, vacancy of words, thoughts, actions.

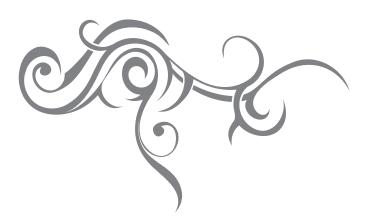
Sheltered within my cold heart, breeze from continuous empty days massive explosions of my frost-bitten mind lying on the curb

Maniacal breath shoving freedom out of my mind refusing to be the refugee of rough security.

My feet are swollen from personal mischief my body shaken from life's grasp.

Erase the black footprints from a cold heart.

Kiana Murphy



## I Am from D.C.

Not from Maryland, but from D.C. Many people from here are pugnacious. Many people live in perpetual beefs. You walk down the street into the wrong community, then you might get beat.

My life is a little different, I don't care what people think of me. I have a mission, not to be another terrible statistic.

Being African-American,
people look at us strange,
like we don't have a brain.
Everyone does, but it is your choice
to use the knowledge.
Many don't use it correctly
and make mischievous decisions,
not caring about a consequence
until the mind is made up
about what it wants to do.

I'm from D.C. with a mission: It's not where you're from, but what you want to become.

Steven Reed

#### D.C.

Drugs, alcohol, and violence. Things that people refer to when they hear D.C. That's what is in D.C., not what it means to be from D.C.

To me it means...
Jump rope in the middle
of the street, soul food on
Thanksgiving, with fried chicken
and sweet potatoes.
Public schools and children
all over. Cheese buses and metro
stations early in morning.

Hard times and painful sorrows finally come to the light.

Loud go-go and mischievous kids fill the late-night streets.

Eternal wounds scarred by the judgment of flamboyant community.

Through the good and the bad, you stay through it all. So, before you think of D.C., know what it's like to be from D.C.

Marquise Lewis

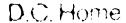
## People here

People are not normal They all hate this world of discrimination and violence

In this world, not right for D.C. Is there no love for public transportation such as the train or bus?

Town houses built just to be destroyed What is D.C.?
A beloved city of war

Walter Jones



D.C., where should I begin?
The question is: what, where, when?
I love it, but there's so much to dislike,
Like stabbings, shootings, attempts to end your life.
But love to learn, learn to love, I guess.
Oh, one thing I didn't tell you yet—
Think twice before you move here, got it?

Khalil Jones





### Where I'm from

I'm from the place where people kill, Where people steal, Where there's so much beef in one li'l city, Where no one feels pity.

Homeless people on the street, I don't know what else to say. People only look for the hate in D.C. Instead of the love or good things that are happening. They need to look for the positive,

Janine Green

Instead of the negative.

# Beyond the District, Beyond Where We Say We Are

Sorrow from disappointment The television ads are our salvation

SmartTrip doesn't get us far But we get to where we need to be Nowhere...

Everything's the same Day by day Boredom controls us all

Violence erupts Kids smilin' They never knew what hit 'em

The national anthem doesn't unite us It gives us a reason to believe Things can never be done right

Eternal silence
The tension is unbearable
This place has a different lifestyle

School isn't taken seriously Texts turn into our own personal creation Self-taught, maybe it'll get you somewhere



Mambo sauce
Brainwashes the mind
Addicted to this, my life expectancy has decreased

Go-go beats

My heart into another dimension

Desire to dance toward sin

Scared of your shadow

These streets are from the damp and dark places

That give us a chill, a sudden fear

Everything is given to us But it's always turned down Life is so much harder

Violation of all aspects You can never own what you've never had Everybody isn't treated the same

People don't care
About the things they bring into this world
Things just run astray

Thoughts are clustered Focus is destroyed Failure. Drop out.

We exist beyond the golden arch Power is our main source of anger Money creates this frustration

We are among the unknown
We are expected to achieve great things
Our presence ignites skepticism

The star on the map We are creators of this asylum

Kiana Murphy

#### Untitled

Are the words the reason that I have to write these things that they believe are magnificent?

My fingers cramped up from the thousands of words that littered my paper, that showed my creativity and the potential that only I possessed.

I am the newfound, raw, untouched, new knowledge of my generation.

Shawntay Kent

# What It Means To Be From Here

What it means to be from D.C.
Just stop, look up, and take a good look at me
Custom-made fitteds,
shockerz and bony jeans

Ice on the chain lookin' something mean In high school right now but still hustlin' in da streets

Money known as cream dat's one hell of a treat reppin' hoods, stealin' cars, sittin' 'hind bars constantly hearin' people sayin' you won't get far

Playin' all day, in da go-go by night getting' loose off da goose and always leavin' wit a fight And den da white man ask me where I be so I tell him, "Ay! be from D.C."

Marcus Johnson

# The Voices That Create the Mind

You told me if everything wasn't right, I was a failure

When the sawdust from the footprints disappears, The mourning begins

That loyalty is a must,
But sometimes the universe can't handle that

You told me that the worst part in life Is right behind the door

You told me to give you change, Those coins nobody pays attention to

That you were in need, And I didn't have any problems

These salty pain killers Were the result of what you told me

The venom from your words gives me the ability to believe That bittersweet ain't so sweet

You told me to follow my dreams, Those things beyond the stars

Why do those cobwebs become so thick, Blurring the vision that wants to go Into the center of a crying heart?

Kiana Murphy



## American Trees

For every tree you cut down You slowly kill a piece of me I solemnly promise that I will Protect the trees around me

Through the storms And the rain I will always return To protect them

I will not let society
Consume the trees
Throughout it all
No more trees will be sacrificed
I will rise up to the occasion
To save the trees

DarVel Suggs



# No Such Thing

There's no such thing as happiness, because people are always sad. And there's no such thing as darkness, because that's all you see in the light. Without happiness, you would be a very sad personyou might think about that special somebody in the world, but without darkness you wouldn't see anything in the dark. And if you keep going, then you will see light. And there's no such thing as habit, because you can hang around people and they will think that they are a bad habit. And there's no such thing as a film, because all the films are always black and white and the real world has color. There's no such thing as crooked, there's no such thing as a scheme, and I wonder how many other ideas are not really in the world.

Marcus Barnes



# Word Play

The words
Hit hard, like a car crash
The locked feeling
The laughs
They stare
Separated
Slowly the
Pain comes

#### Words

Just another way to hurt In the middle of a feud a hiccup of hateful slang can be unleashed This will be the outcome: Chaos

Damon Kee



#### What Does It Mean?

Surreptitious people right around the corner A simulation of familiar life of a home Deep down, knowing they're just as frightened as you are Walking the streets alone Lights flickering on and off People walking by, looking at you as if you're nothing but scum Going to the train station, taking out your SmartTrip card People thinking there is a lot on it They start to surround you, throwing curse words at you, rough you up a bit "Give us the card," they say You throw it in their faces, try to make a run for it They're not finished with you yet Grab your arm, throw you to the ground kicks start coming your way the fists are next Someone comes, they run off only to find out he didn't come to help Looks at you and walks away as if it's an everyday thing You get up, limp to the nearest pay phone no one's home You leave the station, careful not to trip An elderly woman comes to you "Are you okay," she asks You look at her dumbly, limp off into the dark So what does it mean to be from D.C. It could be Hell, but also okay So you tell me, "What do you think?"

Nichell Kee

#### Remain Silent

Choke back the words that once had meaning; they will not be heard, save your breath, like secrets in your throat.

Cherish that you didn't mess up by stumbling and stuttering on verbs. "Cut your tongue" I say.

Your eyes told me more than thrice.

Maryum Abdullah

#### The Poem with No Name

Thankfulness, an attempt to heal the wounds of your sins. But also to respect those who have given so much.

Little words that make a big difference in the life of a loved one. Kindness and laughter frolic through your heart like a tranquil meadow.

Heartwarming gestures put a cheerful smile on someone's face. We treat others the way we want to be treated.

Marquise Lewis

#### Unwanted

You have the right to remain in this state, if you try to leave you will be shot.

Anything you do will get you in trouble and get you shot.

You have the right to call a lawyer when you get shot.

If you call a lawyer, he will shoot you too.

If you try to run away you will be shot.

DarVel Suggs



## Memory

My childhood memory is when I used to go over to my cousin's house and play the game every day, but since she is getting older, it's no fun anymore.

When I was little, I was very shy to speak in front of other people, I was very nervous speaking to my teachers, and I never messed with anybody, but people used to mess with me.

I was very quiet. I always wanted to be alone and in my memory, I had a stressful life because my father always hit on me and my sister, and my life was destroyed by my own flesh and blood.

I have the most deadly childhood memories in my life and that will never change, and I will never forget those dark memories, but I still had love for him.

And that's my childhood memory

Marcus Barnes



## Crazy

When the world ends I will run the halls until blur falls from my sneakers. When the world ends I will clip up Mr. Branch, shatter a tear, laugh and say I'm sorry. When the world ends I will jump off my 1st period teacher's desk and do a blooming cartwheel across the eternal floors. I wouldn't sway down the street of garments— I would skip obstacles around wreckage, ashes from burning buildings. It would be Tuesday after school, forever boundaries and unfinished business. I won't barricade my shadow; it would run wild, the heaviness in my fury would recall precious ventures

Renita Williams

and maintain them forever.

### What I see and feel

Killing, knowledgeable know-it-alls Ignoring idiots, independent ideas Recruiting righteous redemption Knowing kingsize kindness kills

Kirk Murphy



#### NAKIA

Now named Nakia, not a number April and apple, acrostic alliteration Kind kinfolk, keep knowing Ice in ice cream? Involvement, interested All afternoon, acting active

Nakia Better

#### Untitled

Sequan Wilson

There might be a stone in sight—
Emphasis on the might
Maintain composure in the shadow of the day
Shatter the glass and destroy the display
I feel heaviness in my chest
What I'm doing is something, I won't digress
Grab everything we can't carry
Cause we know the cops won't hurry
Then a flame starts within the stone's rust
I can't get through this, so I burn without a fuss
Ashes to ashes and dust to dust
The world ended along with my first rush

# The Next Day of Fate

The day when I am alone in this world
When this day turns into ashes
It shatters into a globe of heaviness
To maintain these boundaries
Blooming breezes have to reappear in the sun of music
The numbness in my body is wild in a puddle
But my reflection is in the mirror and I watch it burn into flames
The shadows tell me a secret about the next day of fate
You know I don't listen to dust of gravity that turns into lightning

Stelita Better

### After Life

There is no afterlife.

When you pass, your spirit goes to God.

I watch a channel called ghost hunters.

It is about these people going to an old house, kingdom, or palace, discovering people, dead, and their spirits are ghosts.

They try to get some attention to prove they're ghosts.

I watch that show because it is real.

It's creepy sometimes.

Sometimes I'm scared to go to sleep.

Eric Armstead



#### Human Denial

There is no such thing as war

There are only minor conflicts enraged
by the twisted minds of overlooked government
A melody of misunderstanding
ricochets off the barriers of my self-conscious
as the façade of the military remains intangible
Eyes of the public continue to stay clouded by the void
of human luxuries that caress the soul
So you ask yourself, "Is there?"

Marquise Lewis

#### Painless

There is no such thing as pain
Just lack of bliss, twisted, flinching
Chills down my spine
Taste of a lemon mixed with the un-sweetener
Flimsy doohickeys that are supposed to keep me from pouncing
Subliminal films that make my whole body quiver
Drop down on all fours
Say it's all in your head
And it is...but I got a cold and can't really sweat it out
It hurts, whether it's mental or physical
It's numb
But it's not pain
For that doesn't exist

Maryum Abdullah



My Boring Poem

Algebra, History, Reading, and Music These are the subjects that make up My boring day After school I like to enjoy A great day A Creative Writing Club Poetry to calm down the soul After a stressful day Wrestling and racing video games To finish my day Boredom disappears.

Marquise Lewis

#### Distance

Unearned family, distant love, that hurts me most. Not knowing who they are, just living far, far away. No one knows the way I feel-A broken wing, God from nowhere, a family unknown, from the darkness of love needing me more and more each day. Past time.

Keyama Robinson

#### Boredom

To get through these long days I shoot alien monsters for hours and hours I run around the house fighting my brother just for fun Listening to a beat without my friend is like being bored, but I never am I go outside, I look into the sky I play football

DeArren Dawkins



# The End of the World's Shadow

If the world were to end
I would see a shadow following me
But it's not mine
Now I notice that there is a
Blur in my head
Thinking of all my enemies
As I walk past them
My shadow begins to kill
And cry for the pain they caused
But there is no shadow
It's me

Khalil Jones

#### Mask

My mask shows kindness:
generous and helpful
sweet and innocent
smart and a participant.
But what will you see
behind the mask of perfection?
And what will your reaction be,
terrified or nice?
You'd know if you knew
the real me
under the mask of perfection.

Cristal Sandoval

# Why She Married That Man

I don't know why she married that man He messed up everything He came in our lives, all nice and cool trying to show love and affection while the whole time taking my mom in another direction He was setting us up in his mind We moved to a new house We were happy for a while That man came home every day with a smile knowing that he was about to roll to leave us with all these bills He left my mother with tears. We came back during the year Everything was okay again until she let him back in again.

Thomas Whitney

#### What do you want to be?

You have the right to remain silent, the right to get out, and the right to be quit of crippled ground. Every thing you've done to hate yourself and other people, you cannot get mad and go into the darkness, not into the shadows with the evil monster that is under you, don't go there. The thing about facts, they can't find you homeless on the street, and not in a home with a family that misses you. You need a fence that holds you back from black mist that never goes away, and you refuse to go to jail, so you will be on house arrest and in a shelter that has not a lot of food, with your mind erased but with dreams of your father above.





# Long Gone By

It was one day when
I was in a fight after school.
A boy named Ishmael kept
starting stuff.
I saw him around
his way.
He said Hey what do you think
you doing around here?
I said Man shut up
and get out my face.
He said alright, I will see you on Monday.
But today
I am more mature
so it doesn't matter anymore.

Eric Armstead

#### Poem For A Burning Heart

If somebody nosy asks
"Well, how is it feeling?"
Fall down on your knees
because the unexpected has been revealed.

If they get scared and they say "Well, why is it happening?"
Tell 'em "love hurts, minds forget, futures are unknown failures."

And if they give you that confused, black stare trying to understand your thoughts to the point where they say "Well, are you gonna tell me about it?" Just stand there and let the emotions filter through your cranium, staring deep into their eyes exchanging their mind-reading.

You stand there, cold yet broken Screaming to find an exit, a place far from your penetrating eyes. Blood written deep down in a dark place, waiting for trespassers within the torn pages of my diary.

#### Kiana Murphy



#### Reality

As the numerous numbers begin to count down I realize the sun's smile transitions to the moon's frown As the Alaskan snow begins to melt away I wonder if we'll all see the next day Being true to the fact, we're all gonna die Most of us will burn in what's not well Many of us will go to where it's all swell Some will jump (with joy) Some will cry Some will laugh Some will fry But all will know the sad truth with the penetration of reality that everything must die.

Marcus Johnson

# Coming to Southeast

I remember when I first moved here to DC almost 9 years ago

That was the worst day ever I wish I could go back

I came from North Carolina which is much better than Southeast

I said that it was better because the crime rate is better

And there are excellent neighbors there and there are great restaurants

I absolutely loved it down there I used to be able to go outside

and play without worrying about anything happening to me out there

That was my worst memory, coming to Southeast DC

DarVel Suggs

# A Day I Want to Forget

I want to forget the day I was about to fight. I forced her to the locker. It was like a big snowflake hitting the ground, it was like men rebuilding a building. Then I smacked her. It was like an echo, it was like a splinter in someone's foot, sounds like a greedy pig. I charged toward her like a mouse running for cheese It was like a distance awayyou can hear it, the day I want to forget

Kierra Parks

#### I want to forget

I would want to forget getting hit by a car on a wonderful day of school

that day, great after, ok driving, fun

getting hit, disastrous I wish it never had happened

Walter Jones

What it's like to keep a secret (for those who haven't)

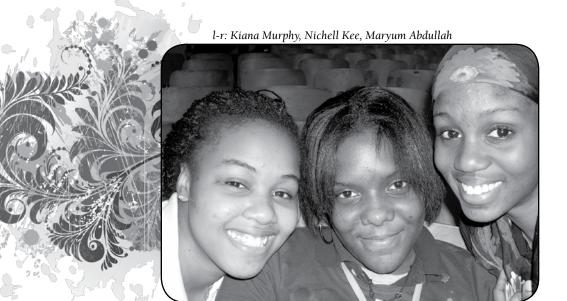
Feeling like you're not finished Sweat reflecting your urge to speak But the words are lost Flames wild in your chest, growing, growing It's the feeling of exposure Lurking in the depths of emptiness Formed behind your eyes Suffering the burn in silence Confined within every corner Claustrophobic Falling in a puddle of tears Created from your unspoken nonsense Coping with the cold heart Salty waters, heated skin Concrete, yet unstable Thoughts swallowing every emotion It's like knowing your heart wants to, But your mind is sentenced to silence.

Kiana Murphy

#### Never

There is no such thing as death
There are only dreams once death strikes you awake
People believe that when you die
You're going to rot
And people are going to forget about you
Death isn't truly what it reveals
It is really a deep rest that God anoints to a certain citizen
When their time comes
But if your time comes with Satan,
It will be too late...you've paid the price

Kirk Murphy



# Unique Signature

My slanted signature sounds like a run-on sentence that's never stopped running My small signature speaks louder than words,

Even though it's not saying anything

My straight line signature has a whole bunch of meaning with no dictionary My grandma always says "stay between the lines and don't forget the period." I always distance myself from the crowd,

Slow but steady, I ease over there

My idiot curl, twist, swirl and turns in my signature stare out into the distance When I sign your poetry book

I yearn and crave to find new and better ways to write my name Slide left then right, up and down, to the beat of my pulse When I write my name, it makes you want to shout.

Renita Williams

#### Look

Look at one thing, appearance (you should know what I mean), then the potential philosophical mind how hot a girl or guy is instead of how beautiful their emotions blend think about it, you love your physical appearance but you're dying inside because of emotional clearance so I'll tell you again, you'll never know what's in there outer appearance is dependable to you, but there's probably more

Seguan Wilson



# What It's Like to Live Your Last Minute of Life

Trying to tell God "Forgive me for my sins" Like I'm trying to pull my life back together (50 seconds left) Many memories running through my head Remembering how I first learned to walk On the apple juice-stained rug of my mother's (30 seconds left) My heart begins to pound faster Like my life is close to being over (10 seconds left) I gasp for air as if this is the end I fall to my knees Praying to God "Send me an angel" (1 second left) I feel my heart stop My life is over Wishing that I could go back to make

Kirk Murphy

My life better than it was

#### Lose My Boredom

I lose my boredom by sleeping and falling into an unconscious world where everyone and everything is powered by me.

And everything is myself in my twisted mind, and I'm the king and I'm above the slaves of the bored days—
I do what I want.

In my unconscious mind, where you take steps in a path that no one else will take, and I'm lost in my mind I control, because I'm bored.

I should break things that don't belong in my mind, just to become unbored in a world alive that stays the same.

Walter Jones

# To My Old Friend

I want to 4get meeting you
Completely
I wish you never even
saw me
Believe me
I'm serious
I must have been delirious
at first
because knowing you were
dumb,
I loved having fun
2gether
but I can see our
friendship is not going to
get better.

Janine Green

# Forget

i would want to forget the day my cousin died, and my uncle. i would want to forget nine eleven because a whole lot of people died by plane crashes and by falling buildings like the pentagon. i would want to forget the days i did bad things like stealing, and a lot more. i just wish those memories didn't happen.

Edward Marshall



#### #1

He's among the top three,
Not in class, but the whole country.
Self-proclaimed genius, but modesty is his profession,
But his pointless confessions further hide his depression,
Fate is cruel, ending is a mess,
Tears of woe fill the room, but I digress.
No help from anyone, but I have to confess,
With a mind like that, this took me by surprise,
His ingenuity and intelligence shouldn't be his demise,
Why can no one hear his cries?
I believe I can handle that question myself,
He never asked anyone for help.

Sequan Wilson

#### O, Graceful Weapons

Swing with intent, my graceful scimitars against a bland suit of armor, dressed in cavalry, with intent...to kill.

Sing, silent blades, let this coliseum hear an éclat of tings and tongs, move in a dither. Heckle these walls, scream reflection.

Distend with fine simplicity a show. Allay these rebel thoughts, my graceful scimitars, force their demeanor quiet resignation.

Free me, these scimitars with gentle, vile, seraphic intentions.

James Tindle



#### The Two Sides of Me

The broken fears that can't stop being angry at something stupid. It is like a moment to yourself, you look out the window and you think that disrespecting something happens in a fire, but your family's spirit is full of love that lifts the endless blood of life. You dropped with roses all around you, but you are blackened in the shivering cold of a crystal ball that shakes and never dies. In your past, you felt dangerous without a man by your side. It is the bitter things that hurt you, but when you hurt somebody a tear falls like you did something wrong but you don't feel wrong about it. You say your prayers to live beyond safety to hear your voice and taste of the silent song of the Lord. The echo of cherishing random things nurtures that selfish daughter's stillness swift through the rage of light deeply in the future. The other side of me is like being stuck in the darkness of shadows.

Stelita Better

# My childhood

My life as a child someplace where unbelievable silence, silence in the wild eye rose with a heartbeat.

My eyes everlasting, full of memories drifting into beams of the moonlight, whirling into an ocean of nothingness.

My eyes see forgiveness, cried, cried for strength.

And the vision of all glittering memory will not be forgiven.

Nakia Better

#### Dreams

There is no such thing as dreams
There is just an empty void
In your mind
That's why you can barely
Remember your dreams

When you go to sleep Your mind becomes vacant All thought disappears Things seem ethereal But are not dreams

Dreams are tricks played by
The human mind
They almost seem real
But never come true, which is why
There is no such thing as dreams

DarVel Suggs

Graceful Weapons, Come

(A Sequel)

i scream for those who oppose us
Graceful weapons, with
Tragedy in
your arms
Graceful weapons, rhetoric in
your blade
a sweet, canorous
pathogen.

Watch us, our masters as if we are not your slaves Watch me and them, sweet scimitars with rhythmic vice bruising your sky implications coherent, free us.

Maunder
let them watch our pain
let them hear you, graceful
weapons
i'll play at your side
with a melodious parry
and inventive
thrusts.

O, Graceful cadence listen to your maker those graceful scimitars, the blueprint of my aggression *James Tindle* 



#### Streaks

Blue Orange Green
Yellow Red
Streaks of the past
into
the future
movement like cars on a street.



"I, too sing America.
I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen when company comes"

When company comes, mom thinks
I will act up and not be myself. My
Mom thinks I will have no table manners
or start to play with my food. My
Mom thinks I will embarrass her when company comes.

David McIntyre

# Caged Bird

"I know why the caged bird sings"
The caged bird sings till morning comes
"For The Caged Bird sings Of Freedom"

My caged bird sings to get out. My caged bird needs his own house.

Mya Manigan

#### Kidnap

"Ever been kidnapped by a poet? If I were a poet I'd kidnap you."

I would take you to my house throw you on the couch ask you questions.
I kidnapped you because you are beautiful like peaches you are so sweet
Baby I want you to be my lady.

Kyree Matthews

#### Mom's Last Confessional

They notice these obscure bruises: emphatic love, latent hate.

A week before i issued the metallic bruises his punches left seven marks, one for every day i cried, so i scratched a star with seven rays.

His speech loving his fists irascible, unscrupulous I don't bemoan, but i hate these selfish walls i pity them.

These walls don't scream, so i run corners jumped at me down junctioning hallways to this dimly lit haven.

Dovish she sleeps
emotionally colorblind
just impregnated on a day of swollen and selfish vows
under her circular nightlight
my burdens embodied within my eyes
the last uncolored light she'll ever know.

I sat down three headaches before the migraine i received from the cataclysm of fists i sat down on my knees next to this lifeless bassinet, pulled the metal bruiser from its perch and went to see her, colored.

His face, watching the doorway, set in malicious snicker His face ignorant, schadenfreude.

James Tindle

# 47 Pictures, 47 Black Faces

"Taped to the wall of my cell are 47 pictures of 47 black faces"
I went to jail for acting racist.
Man I regret doing that in so many peoples faces. Man
Oh boy I could've gone so many places. 47 pictures, 47 black faces. Man I shouldn't never have acted racist.

Nyesha Morrow

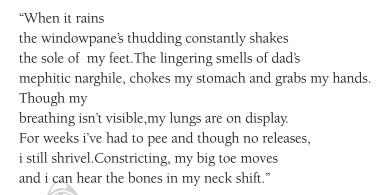
# When I told of my penpal's anorexia

"On those sunny days when moms wants to go out i sit in the the window, watching the minivan pull from the driveway. That window, my patient comrade, the one with the bird's eye view, the one with the small seat in between its two walls, the one made for a five year old girl, the one that holds my withered and compacted.

At the base of the bed hammering down mom's secret stash of doritos hoping for an escape.

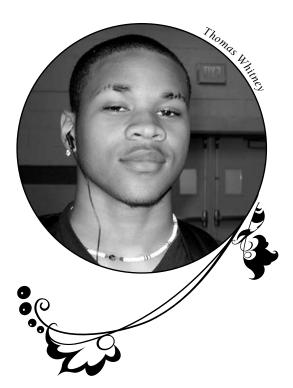
Secreting his stomach as far as he can within his ribs praying for flat on his corpulent reflecting body.

When alone he sits in the bathroom tiled adventure for company. Persistently banging his stomach against the bath grasping the escapism, residual amounts of cheese on the tile at the base of the toilet. Stoically, stubbing his hands and knocking his chin against the porcelain rim.



That 6'7 handsome giant, spent his time drinking 40's and downing that boy's edible dignity, ejaculating insults...who, with no fat children, enkindled an anorexic-bulimic child who's epidermis burns with the vomit he spits up with every feast, whose voice is no longer amiable with the scratchy tone of a man who fought sleep and befriended a rum bottle from the base of that bed.

That boy, the one who obviates his hunger and sleeps light on an empty stomach, tired and agog, his meatless knees rubbing themselves into anger, grabbing tidbits from beneath his pillow, a sallow sleeper.



Sitting in that window, back bent from famine
Arthritis in his fingers, lips swollen, breathing
sharp. Cold then hot, hot then cold, caved-in,
celibacy, the shadows, cementing his skeleton-like figure to that corner window
the one with the seat in between its two walls, the one with the bird's eye-view,
the one that holds a five year old girl,
the one that held his compacted and withered.

The aghast look on his face
His body
sallow
still
His eyes xanthous and blank
Fading from that corner window.

James Tindle



# Caught

"Ever been kidnapped by a poet? If I were a poet I'd kidnap you."

If I were kidnapped by a poet I would be stuck in a house reading poems and more

with my brain aching and sore. I'm sitting in the chair I can't take no more.

Jasmon Gassaway

#### Liberty's Glasses

"Excuse me but lady liberty needs glasses and so does Mrs. Justice by her side." So if you don't have any glasses go to Mrs. Justice because you just don't know. Go get some if you need some because Mrs. Justice is on your side.

Christina Moody

#### Such a Fool

"You Are such a fool I haveta love you"

Hold you like you're my boo I'll never let you go I'll tell you later cause right now we got haters Let's move out this spot

"But we real cool we left school we lurk late"

We share traits
Don't really know
We'll call your old girlfriend a foe cause I'm here now
We all go down
down to the ground
never to come up again
because to me your more than
just a friend
right now you're an addiction.
If you leave me, I'll feel affliction.

Danisha Woodard

#### Deferred

"What happens to a dream deferred" is You don't pay attention to it anymore, You set it aside. What happened to A dream, to me when it is deferred I would set it aside and just let it disappear. My dream deferred was amazing Because it was exciting and interesting.

Courtney Slater

#### We Must

"If we must die let it not be like hogs hunted and pinned in an inglorious spot. While round us bark the mad and hungry dogs."

Let us not be dragged down by darkness.
If we must see the light, let us believe in ourselves before we make it there.

Our lives are not always easy but we have to make it better. Some of our lives flash before our eyes when we die.

We will not be driven down by the pits of hell or captured by the devil and put down for rest or work.

We will fight for our freedom and when we die, the freedom that we fought for, God will make our lives much better.

Seleen A. Ford

#### 1100

"I too sing America
I am the lighter sister
They send me to eat in the kitchen when company comes."
They love me very much.
I do like to sing.
I am a good person.
You do so like me!
You really are nice.
I don't like to write.

Erica McCrae



#### Abracadabra

"We are the young magicians" freaking people's minds in the city. New York's asking how we do it but a true magician never reveals his secrets charging people five dollars a trick to do amateur tricks.

We are the young magicians and no one will know how we do it.

Pournew Miller



# All I Want to Do Is Read The Newspaper

All I want to do is read the newspaper but I keep seeing Obama. Yes we see him, what about Obama I saw him already, I know he's in the White House. Tell me something new I don't know. I like to hear about him but not every day. Just tell me something I want to know. Like more information about pistachios.

Jasmon Gassaway



# All I want to do is read the newspaper

All I want to do is eat pistachios
But I can't because they tested for salmonella.
I want to watch the news.
But I can't because this boy keeps
looking at me. All I want to do is eat
peanut butter on my
sandwich but I can't because there's something
in it. All I want to do is hold my nephew
but he don't like me picking him up.

Courtney Slater

#### Newspaper

All I want to do is read the newspaper.

People are dying While other people are in court lying. Twitter is new online talking to people who don't know who. Looking at the comics, it's really funny turn the page, people getting married and calling each other honey. But all I want to do is read the newspaper.

Daja Leonard

#### We The World

We will never unite as one, because the world would never be as open minded as me.

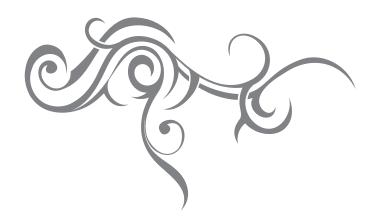
We came to this earth with a purpose, but that purpose will never be

We start trouble and try to fit in. We curse, fuss and all those other sins.

We feel like the world owes us promises, dreams, and success, but we owe ourselves to do our best.

We the world, and we're not perfect.

Davon Ford



#### Down But Not Out.

All I want to do is read the newspaper to see people lose their jobs.

How they take less money and less money then after that they are broke.

And see if they can afford the good buffets.

All I want to do is see if they can pay their rent.

And also to see if they lost their full-time jobs.

I would want to save up like them, and save until I could own my own business.

I don't want to want to get ready to eat.

I don't want to get ready for school.

I don't want to do my chores and watch my sister.

I don't want to go to the store.

All I want to do is read the newspaper.

Kierra Parks

#### News Flash

All I want to do is read the newspaper, but All I do is sniff and sniff again Bail-out or constitution Go to heaven Eat snacks Watch a movie? Be an adult?

Be a liar
Take out the trash
Eat corn
Go to class.

But all I want to do is read the newspaper.

Christina A. Moody



#### We So Sweet

We so fresh. We shop at H & M. We

get our flats from Payless. We go to Go-Go's. We

have a ball. We sometimes fall. We

stay out late. We gets da bait. We

are so bad. We wake up and we

remember the fun that we had.

Ieshia Mayo

#### We

We go outside. We come back in. We watch TV. We

eat green. We go to sleep. We run fun. We

color purple. We got the bait. We outside late. We is great.

Tanasia Lloyd



#### We Box

We work abs. We throw jabs. We

dance flash. We hit bash. Our

hands smash. Blood do splash.

Our eyes don't blink, your knees will sink.

Devonte Tolbert

# Partying with Mom

Go-Go with mom not so fun you can't shake you can't break just stand like a tall rake.

Cookout with mom you gotta stand under her arm. Only look to eat a little no boys near. Mall with mom buy what she wants you to wear do everything her way don't dare be rare.

A day with mom might not be so fun.

Zane Harrison



#### Athletic

We athletic We athletic ball sometimes we fall athletic we jone we athletic sign out we fresh and athletic we cook em

Marlon McDowell

#### Pretend

Pretend I can't see the darkness in front of me.

Pretend I can't see the pain of my eyes straining to see

Pretend I can't see the scar of the eclipse in front of me.

Pretend I can't see the thought of no lights in front of me.

Imani Hinds

#### Success

Many African-Americans invented and achieved, and it's all because they had faith and they believed; they risked their lives for you and me that's why we should look up to the heroes that set us free, like Martin Luther King when he said his speech, or like Rosa Parks when she didn't give up her seat. They taught us to set out for our dreams and never give up, even if we don't succeed just keep our head up, and attempt another dream. Like everyone says, two times the charm, like the great march leader Lew Farrakhan and the million man march, the way he said his speech he really had heart, so now it's our responsibility to play our part, they're counting on us to do our jobs.

If you put in effort it won't be hard!

Sheldon Hickerson

#### Tremember

I remember when no one could coax me to play football, When I'd stand there thinking about the man I'd get mad in the moon, though words filled head and stomach

Kenard Wyatt

#### Drunk man

Pretend I can't see a drunk man walking cross the street

Pretend I can't see him trying to hold himself up, to get to the other side

Pretend I can't see his army jacket getting dirtier and dirtier

Pretend I can't see him going into the liquor store and getting another bottle

Pretend I don't see him pass away into ashes that fly away just pretend, just pretend.

Tylashia Joyner

#### Not There

Pretend I can't see my so-called friends avoiding me starting to act flakey.

Pretend I can't see that my whole world is crashing down on me that the sky is not blue as the sea.

Pretend I can't see feels like people watching me and life is not good as it seems.

Pretend I can't see that my hair is falling out repeatedly that every night my eyes are red as can be

Pretend I can't see every one that I love is dying on me and I feel so lonely.

Pretend I can't see that I smile every once in a while and that my best friend did something very foul.

Pretend I can't see my name is Angelique and life is not what I want it to be

Angelique James



#### Pretend

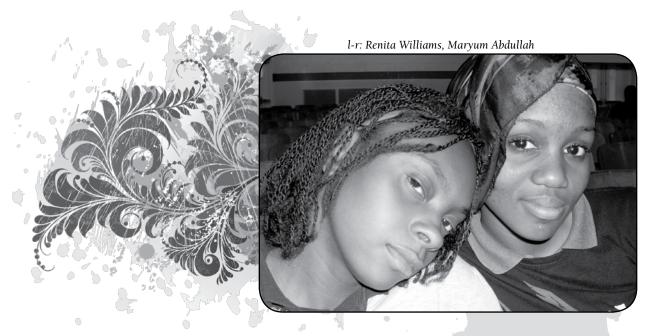
Pretend I can't see the other side of me waiting to be

Pretend I can't see the dreams waiting for me the souls I can free

Pretend I can't see the things accomplished for me the goals you set to be

Pretend I can't see how you feel raising me the things you've done for free

Marlon McDowell



#### The Current

You nolegged dog of my heart, glad, happy not silent but there in my mind. A winter chill that touches my spine. Maggie Moo's next door to Alero's looking outside of the window—you see U street busy with barking dogs.

Imani Hinds

# School Song

You big dirty school with your unclean bathroom and your mean teachers who care about themselves. But your dances be fun. They short. Your pizza is the best pizza I tasted yet. Hart Middle School, you couch potato, eating chips all day.

Shamiyah King

#### Poem

You scary house on east street by itself, looking

like a haunted mansion in the fog.

Tyray Johnson





#### Six

You green train line track tunnel to any destination I choose. You snare a place with temptation I walk away from one place of blasting music or games on every corner, that store, food station in the middle. Real big place, five side stores. I still have not been to that notorious place that makes the other places look dead, fifty or more dollars I need to be there, you know that very well, filled with five or more thousand people in it. You place to go see people. Pentagon City is how I know it.

Walter Jones

# The Makings of You

You be live on
Saturdays, be like
the brother of the
Bryan Manor,
your parking lot full
of kids playing tag
or manhunt. Your
buildings be filled
with drug dealers
selling drugs to addicts,
steps full of addicts
waiting in line to get
their drugs. You
and your rats make
kids run away forever.

Kesahn Kaigler



#### The Old Home

You big beautiful white cloud full of love and hate, happy but not sad, powerful but not silent. The White House so rich with roses that smell so good grass that's cut so rare, how busy you are. House of the first Black President. So glad to live in this moment in my life. How grateful I am. To have you in the grandest city in America. with the history of the war of men fighting to be free. But now thankfully home to us.

Tylashia Joyner



#### Remember

I remember when no one could coax me to play baseball.
When I'd stand there thinking about the day in front of me though words filled my head
I hate him for making me play

Sanchez Threadgill

# History

On Friday I shot hoops by Bald Eagle, the sun was beaming and I still dropped buckets on my cousin until the sun dropped.

Telly Tinker

#### A Young Boy

A young boy all alone on the side of the street, rhymes in his head as he taps with his feet.

Rhymes running through his head like rats on the street. He makes history as he raps to the beat.

He emerges from the curb still rapping to himself. Then he raps out loud to the sound of his steps.

He raps all the way to the recording studio, then he speaks in the mic as they beat to his flow.

After a couple minutes of rhyming to the beat, they finish the recording and put it on a CD.

The CD passes around and they soon became copied. The first rap CD which made the world happy.

Davaugntae Shepherd



#### My Heart

The fist in my chest. Red or pink. The one that makes me breath. You keep my life going like how a movie goes on and on for hours. Never give up, tough as a pro-wrestler. Control power is what you have. If you had a choice, who would you give up on?

Dana Kaigler

# A Child's Biggest Dream

A young girl had a dream that she believed in, that she always thought about. She never told anyone cause she said you're never supposed to tell a dream, or it won't come true and it did and she told everyone.

Charmaine Walker

#### What I Don't Know

I don't know how to write a poem but I could play sports catch me on Saturday in Wingate with a ball in my hand.

Telly Tinker

# My Life Is Like

The blooming flower of my life is a surprise in the morning it's like jumping in joy with stepping into heaven, it's jumping on a moon bounce; it's screaming off the top of your lungs; it's just having fun.

Cassandra Taylor

# The Sky

is like air you can walk through it, light blue with white clouds above us giving us light to see the world during the day.

Wonder where we would be if there was no you
You brighten our day with confidence, happiness.
Would we be blind on the dark lonely road?

Niya Rogers

#### Thursday

Thursday afternoon after school looking out the window seeing cars drive past and people picking up children and girls playing jump rope in the street and boys playing basketball, people crossing the street people walking the sidewalk and I see my friend that's my street. That's what I see out my window.

Malik Green

#### Forgiveness

Forgive me for stealing a jacket forgive me for saying bad words out my mouth forgive me for spitting in my little brother's face forgive me for saying I don't have no father because he wasn't there for me forgive me for fighting my best friend over a boy forgive me for failing in math class forgive me for writing on the hallways in Hart Middle School forgive me for everything I ever did bad or wrong.

Lacrecia Johnson





#### Dad I forgive you

Forgive you for not being in my life.

Forgive you for not being there for me when I needed you.

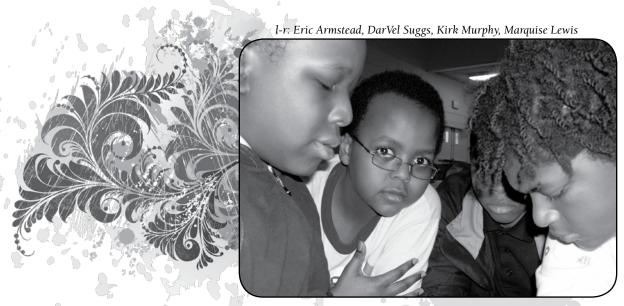
Forgive you when you were out getting in trouble and getting locked up.

Forgive you for not being at none of my football games.

Forgive you for not being there at my first fight.

Forgive you for not being there for me when I needed someone to talk to.
Forgive you for not being there when I was sick.

DaJuan Jones Jr.



# Phone

Black, new blackberry you always are used to chat with my parents small black and fresh out of a box.

Why don't you break like the Xbox 360 and get repaired so the teacher could forget me? Phone get lost into a fog, come back for me when I do something even more stupid.

Teacher on the phone phone please cut off like scissors. Phone beep while chatting to my mother. Black new black berry.

Derrean Jones



Pretend I can't see the sorrow in my mom's eyes at night while she cries about bills.

Pretend I can't see the wrinkles and bags coming out of a thousand homeless eyes

Pretend I can't see the danger around, just think about it I'm lucky to be alive

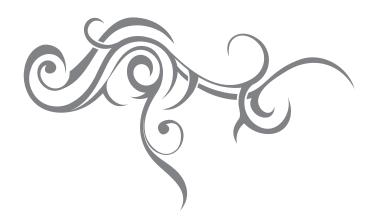
Pretend I can't see how us black people are still under slavery, without knowing it

Pretend I can't see minds in the same frame walking around me

Pretend I'm not writing this right now and I was never here. Forget me.

Davon Ford





#### Pretend

Pretend I can't see or feel courage within me, thinking about what I could be

Pretend I can't see thinking of somewhere it's only me, leave me alone and let me be

Pretend I can't see and take away my family then all I have is misery

Pretend I can't see
This is the life I'm trying to flee
but can't cause it was made just for me

Pretend I can't see only betrayal left in my memory my blindness is trickery

Pretend I can't see

Diantra Landry

#### Pretend

I pretend to be an inspiration but it's not a hesitation I'm surprised for their great celebration

They threw a big birthday bash even when the lights flash I'm glad it's not a big dash

At the end there was a maze I was in a haze lost in a freeway

Really there were big lies at the end I gave away a prize You could see happiness through my eyes

Kourtnee Spencer



#### I Am Mad Now

Heartbeat really fast cried wild eye really unbelievable and memory sudden mind full of hatred

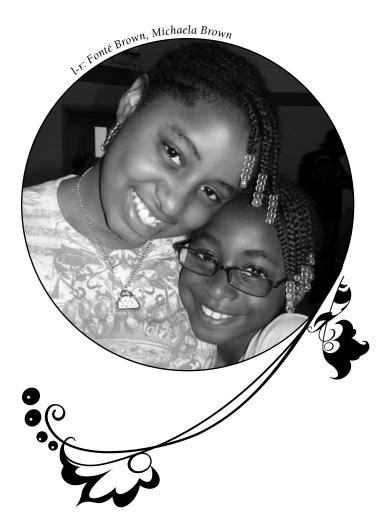
For a long afternoon haze in my mind forever sing songs filled with shadows like a baby rose sudden

Find betrayal in flames somewhere being an inspiration to people that are younger than me sudden forgive

kids that hated on me

Charlene Monroe





#### But

All I want to do is read the newspaper... But I don't want to read the newspaper cause all they do is talk about Obama. I don't want to watch TV. I don't want to go home. I don't want to go to sleep. I don't want to eat no peas. I don't want to do my little cousin's hair cause all she'll do is cry. I don't want any sisters cause they cry too much. I don't want any brothers cause they are bad. I don't want no friends. I don't want to do no homework cause its boring. I don't want to walk home from school because my legs be hurting. I don't want to eat lunch at a certain time. I don't want to watch no scary movies because I get scared. I don't want to go to school. I don't want to be cool. I don't like that girl. I don't want no curls.

Ashley Hinton

# Tang Poem

Swim stroke don't stop now Dive sink hit the ground Cry hurt don't get mad Drown die with no sound

Erica McCrae



# Summer l'ang

Sit chill talk be cool jump dive please stay safe kick kick splash in face

Dante Lewis



# Play=Pain Tang

Run jump please have fun Climb climb block out sun Fall cry hurt your knee run run from that bee

Dante Lewis

# My Hair Tang

Sat long in a chair Put braids in my hair Bright braids what I picked Tight braids make me stare

Chernell Tillman

# Rain l'ang

Pit pat to the ground my face has a frown I'm sad on this day no one is in town

Tai'Lon Jackson

# Green light l'ang

I'll see you real soon I can't stay it's noon I have to go work and bus has no room

Tai'lon Jackson

# Rock in Out Tang

Pop top cause I'm hot Rock stop cause your not Don't get scared get red tick tock stop the clock

Jasmon Gassaway

# Football Tang

In game hike the ball but then tried to stall Move back and got sacked ouch that was a fall

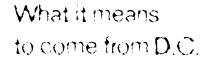
Michael Muhammad



#### I.L.Y. Tang

Lil love I love you She says she does too Love is at stake yep But he has no clue

Lapriya McNair



It means a lot for me to be from D.C., because many rappers and singers come from D.C., like Jennifer Hudson.
One day I want to sing with her and be famous for singing and everybody will know my name.

Lakeisha Thompson



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