The hArtworks Editorial Board

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Inside front cover, l-r: Trayvon Proctor, Faith Thomas, Christa Madikaegbu, Saquan Short, Amir Green, Shannell Jones, Tatiana Pierce, Renita Williams
Welcome to hArtworks, the nation’s only inner-city public middle school literary magazine, written and edited by the students in the after-school writing club at Charles Hart Middle School. hArtworks is published through a collaborative effort between the school and the D.C. Creative Writing Workshop, an independent non-profit working to create a literary renaissance in Southeast Washington. Now in its sixteenth year, hArtworks gives our young writers the opportunity to exercise their creative energies, speak their minds, and be read by an audience throughout the city. The 2016 edition of Poet’s Market recognizes hArtworks as “an outstanding example of what a literary journal can be (for anyone of any age).”

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

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

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

A whisper looks like a person fading away.
The letter B glows like the color blue.
Smiles sound like laughter.
A new idea feels like clothes coming out of the dryer.
Whenever I look at you,
I hear my heart beating faster.
A star sounds like a mascot shooting a shirt cannon.
The sound of a circus makes me smell cotton candy.
A circle smells like peace.

Saebian McKnight

Synesthesia

The star sounds like the Earth's lullaby to us humans
A circle smells like snake sheddings and dishonesty
White moves in the color black
A whisper looks uneasy to an unpleasant ear
The texture of purple feels like smoked lips
The letter B glows the color red
Whenever I look at you, I hear claws on a chalkboard
The sound of gospel makes me smell fresh collard greens
A baby's cry is a symphony to a mother's ears at first sight
Smiles sound like Christmas carols
A new idea feels like a crushed juice box in the palm of a teenager
Every time I bite an apple, I see an evil queen
Awaiting her death

Renita Williams
**Synesthesia Wordplay**

A star sounds like glowing in the dark;
A howl tastes like moonshine.
A circle smells like deliciousness,
Smiles sound like bodaciousness;
White moves in a shadow,
A baby's cry is bright in a meadow.

A whisper looks devious;
Mischief smells like evil, tedious.
Texture of purple feels a-okay;
A new idea feels like a genius new day.

Whenever I look at you, I hear fake.
The sound of what you give
is the feeling what you take.
When I bite an apple, I see land,
But really we're the mans with the plan.

*Jayden Gray*

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**The Senses of Synesthesia**

A star sounds like
it's glowing in the dark;
Well, go ahead and take a nighttime stroll in the park.

A whisper looks like the wind,
silence will be grinned;
Mischief smells like trouble,
so crash and burn under all that rubble.

Trap you in a bubble: It's double trouble!
A new idea feels like gold, you are mold;
I'm the brave and the bold,
and everyone knows that we're all tight and stone cold.

*Jahir Gray*

---

**Benji Synesthesia**

Tears sound like a basketball bouncing around inside a hollow quiet room.
Love tastes like waffles on a Friday morning, with birds chirping in the window.
The texture of red is a sunny day full of joy and great spirits.

*Jamel Pettaway*
Senseless Senses

A star sounds like it's singing
to the other stars;
The howls tastes of
a lot of madness, or a wolf.
A circle smells like Thanksgiving,
a lot of food that people like to eat.
Smiles sound like happiness;
White moves in a diagonal way.
A baby's cry is bright,
like a shooting star going across the black sky.
The texture of purple feels all soft;
Whenever I look at you, I hear you singing like Shakira.
Every time I bite an apple,
I see Snow White waking up
from a true love kiss.

Shaki Knight

The mix up

A new idea gets you excited,
gets the blood pumping in your veins.
The sound of your excitement
smells just like that carry out
up the street from your house,
or that brand-new brownie
that you smile at.

Smiles look like a happy bright face
like a baby's cry, or
the crooked face of someone
about to do something wrong.
Mischief smells like a burnt cookie
or it tastes like grief.

That grief is so sad
it's brighter than a star
that sounds like a new idea
for writing a new poem.

Albert Gordon
Tay Synesthesia

A circle smells like my sister cooking spaghetti in a pot
A whisper looks like a dark untold thought
White moves in a wavy flow like an ocean
The texture of purple feels like an evil, wicked potion
A star sounds like a depressing echo at night
Whenever I look at you, I hear you cry every night.

Tavon Berford

At First Sight

My love looks like a glazed doughnut smothered with the smell of love.
His rose, strong smelling cologne feels like thorns.
Hearing him speak makes me see his true colors.
I feel the taste of his heart beating extremely fast.

Tatiana Pierce

President of mixed emotions

The president of mixed emotions is as dark as a thunderstorm.
One minute the president is roaring like the thunder,
when the next, the president is bright as the sun as it shines down afterwards.

People think the president to be bipolar or confusing but at the end of the day, the president doesn't give a hey.

The president still remains untouched and travels where he pleases while feeling like cold winter breezes or glittering, like a cherry freeze on a hot summer day.

Cortney Seburn
Hopes and Dreams

Brightness at the beginning of life
Hope and greatness;
Some stay in the light
But others go to the darkness.
Floating like a thought,
We always have something on our mind—
Some stay silent, and others speak up.

Skyscrapers reach for the sky/stars
like we have our hope, and dreams.
People try to get their dreams from the stars
but very few succeed;
Some reach a half-point
and get part of their dream,
but the rest don’t even see their dream.

Jewpriya Richardson

A Child’s Universe

Many invisible allies I had,
Traveling in a blink of an eye
Laughter everywhere you go
Untouched by world problems
Glittering with untouched ideas
Triumph is what kids strive for
Voices everywhere screaming of fun
Barbed wire over what is beyond us

Jewpriya Richardson

Loyal

Loyal would eat cinnamon toast crunch
Loyal wouldn’t stab you in the back
Loyal wouldn’t walk on the same street
Loyal would brush her teeth from right to left
Loyal would be friends with only a select few
Loyal would drive a Mercedes-Benz
Loyal would wear a curly ponytail
She is married to anxious
but awaiting her divorce.

Kamilah Jeffreys
In my head

Let it be hope
Let it be bravery
Let it be a universe
telling me right from wrong;
Let it be a transformation
in my day.

I feel like a whirlwind, but
in human form;
I feel like a myth, with struggles.
Sometimes I feel like
I’m by myself,
like mustard without ketchup.

When you’re angry, you might
feel like a bone crushing dog.
When I am angry
you should fear me,
because I’m a reflection of darkness
and a blizzard, all in one

and I might shoot lightning.

Cormonee Mason

I am the president of childhood

My childhood has arrived, and I’m now awake.
Every important thing I do is like a headline.
Others are forgotten.
Sometimes I think back
and wish I was invisible,
or maybe even empty.

When I start falling, I wish for someone
to catch my drift.
I hear a voice in my head
melting my soul but leaving it untouched.
It moves me toward the doorways
but the door is broken,
nothing but silence and a wooden clock.

I try to leave, make them think I’m missing
but when I go to the window
it’s like it has barbed wire surrounding it.
I think to myself:
am I trapped with a freezing clock?
am I felt but untouched?
am I really trapped in my memories,
filed with smoke and unmoved mountains?

Cormonee Mason
A Kinda Love

Let it be a whirlwind.
Let it be a white wave
coming to me like a blizzard of hope,
a mist of love that you might find.
This is a kinda love someone shows.
People struggle for this kinda love.
People hope for this kinda love
but I just wait for love to come,
like it's a vanilla wave from the sun.
I see lightning;
it comes fast.
This I know, my love has come to me.
This kinda love is meant to be.
How did I find this kinda love for me to see?

Briana Bartley

Who is a Peacemaker?

A peacemaker is one who faced hunger
and one who helps the hungry.

A peacemaker is someone who has
been through war
and one who ends war.

A peacemaker will help prisoners
and has been imprisoned.

A peacemaker is one who reminds
but is constantly reminded.

A peacemaker is one who turns around
when his life is upside down.

A peacemaker is one who shines a light in darkness
even when light is nowhere to be found.

A peacemaker is the solution in disguise.

Riley Campbell
4 Corners

The president of pain is a coward.
He runs away from the truth, screaming quiet.
Happy is a language he has forgotten.
Seems to be invisible, lies he left to go rotten.

The president of hope is far from obedient.
The fake religions keep him benevolent—
Broken windows untouched,
filled with sin;
hope has left it once again.

The president of the past comes from the ruined ruins.
He hears fading voices from his broken childhood.
Toward the barbed wire, the more he dwells—
Consults the president of pain
as they fall to hell.

The president of the future is self-reliant.
He believes in glittering, uplifting triumph.
Already he’s forgotten the past;
Runs with the president of hope—
Life’s a play, they’re the cast.

Oh aren’t they in for a surprise:
All four presidents are soon to die.
The reason they rule has proved nothing yet,
but to leave people waiting, or
dwelling to their deaths.

Riley Campbell

Vanilla and Wasabi

Let it be uncertainty.
Let it be defiance, where
honey and jalapenos sever ties.

To instill fear and hope into the mind,
a path of four leaf clovers and broken mirrors
and an open gate to
melancholy roses and human struggle.

Acquired like ginger, wanted like peace
it can be everywhere, it can be everything:
The reflection in the mirror, our faces against the wall;
It can be nothing. It can be all.
The perfect mix of good and bad—
vanilla and wasabi.

Riley Campbell
Dreamy

What if a house is an arrow, colored with the showers and the sun’s baby?

and if it takes you through a parallel universe you wouldn’t go through the door, for it has no knob—you would fly through the window.

As the amber sun has seemed to disappear a pie-less sky leaves you in darkness, soon to be lit by nature’s city lights.

All the people in this land live in the arrow where their lives are dream-like and are Spring forever.

Riley Campbell

Cupid

Let it be a blizzard; Let it be a hurricane— I’ll still shoot arrows out like lightning. If it is a blizzard, I will still shoot arrows for people to show love to each other.

Let it be reflection; Let it be history— They will always know how they meet and their history is upon their people.

I will look upon the universe as if I was in love and I will always remember my history. I will show love, like they are my family, but a different kind of family.

Aaliyah Shaw
All about Happiness!

Happiness lives in a small town filled with nice people and the houses are rainbow colors and happiness has flowers in his yard and the people dress in bright colors. They also get along and have parties and cook out every weekend in the small town! And happiness sings himself to sleep at night and eats ice cream before he goes night-night…

_Shahida Harris-Thomas_

Working to Be

I’m the president of triumph which can be invisible to the ears. I travel through doorways into rooms of joy.

I am untouched like a glittering childhood. I could never be forgotten because I awake the eyes to see.

Rising mountains are what I strive to be. You may feel empty, and hopeless but obedient is what we can be. Don’t look down; Uplift yourself, so you can see.

_Terion Sugick_

Kingdom of shame

The shame kingdom is rising every hour, because of the untouched souls. The souls are untouched because there are no forgiven souls. The terrible triumphs give the kingdom its name. The shame needs some sunlight and it will have an open doorway.

_Kent Parris_
Who is a Poet?

A poet is a person who craves words

A poet is a person who has a solution for everything

A poet is a person who can storm a blizzard of ideas

A poet is a person who has creativity

A poet is a person who will write just to write

A poet is a person who has instant thoughts

A poet is just an artist in disguise

Albert Gordon

Beware of Ghosts

Beware everywhere as ghosts appear with darkness and fear coming in the middle of the night crashing, gnashing coming as fast as they can, just to see the darkness in your eyes. Their teeth are black like a cat. When you get up in the middle of the night you're invisible as you walk in a sewer of evil, just like the devil, unfeeling the ghost is in the ceiling.

Marcantony Pierce
The Now Found

Who knows what we are in?
We are in a dreamy bubble,
wondering where it might land.
There is laughter in that floating bubble,
giggling to keep it active.
There is always a beginning
but no ending, with
a full moon, really smooth.

Kent Parris

The Hand!

I see a hand
floating in the water
trying to grab the sky

And the hand is violet
and it's coming out of the water
and it's tall like a skyscraper

And if you turn the art sideways
it looks like it's a hand coming through a wall

And if you look at it right side up
it looks like a colorful world
with a dry tree in it
with a sky, with no clouds.

Alex Foster

What is a Poet?

A poet is one
who has a mustache.
A poet is one
who does not whisper.
A poet is a prisoner
who is thankful.
A poet is one
who is flooded with kindness.
A poet is one
who is careful,
but once didn't care.

Tyjuan Prailow
Innocent guilt

The president of guiltiness is innocent;
He is blind, but he can see an innocent person anywhere.
He is deaf, can't hear or talk
but he can speak his special language.
He has no voice, so it's silent
but it's also loud.
He has a tattoo, but it is invisible.
He lives around barbed wire.
He is president, and he is guilty of imagination.

Albert Gordon

Perhaps Glooming

I celebrate myself
listening to a jazz symphony.
I rescue people off the roof,
celebrate parties, blowing green
small bubbles with teachers.
In the morning I wake up
watch TV and dance
to the intro and outro rhythm.
I celebrate myself
head to the sky, praying.

Reginald Shepherd

What Ocean?

Yes! Green laughter
tables tumbling
windows shuddering
Evening swirls, twists
and branches swell
Cracks in my skull,
like plexiglass brains
churning, thinking of yes!
Listen to luminous windows
clean, not dusty dirty,
cloudy with a chance of rain.

Reginald Shepherd

Powerful

I've promised my girlfriend
to always say hi to her.
My girlfriend sings a song
to the waterfall.
My mother's promises
I can tell to no one.
I use my eyes to look for
a single cloud in the sky.
I want to blow bubbles at the playground
and be away from all the promises
I've caused.
I want to move forward
but my feet come to a halt.

Joeseph Smith
A part of growing up

The sky is singing out my name.
Realize that I can't come out
because I've got promises,
about six of them.
The powerful pull of fun
is on lockdown,
because I can't do it.
I've got to go forward,
not backward,
because I've got promises.
My whole childhood is melting away.
Did you know when the water falls
it's really crying?

Marcantony Pierce

The Young Response

Is it a fact that old people
know more than young people?
Nah.
Old people want to make it seem
like young people don't know things.
Well guess what? We do.
Promise us truths,
and I promise you we do.
But it is the truth
that we don't know everything.
Reverse your life, all the way
to when you were young.
You loved it.
So why turn your back on the young now?

Marcantony Pierce

Food

The feeling, to think my one thing in life is just simple:
It's the soft, fluffy texture of a marshmallow;
A round, sugary taste of a doughnut;
The long and savory feeling of spaghetti;
The mighty aroma of the supreme burger;
That taste of the acidic feeling of soda,
and the greatest combined food of all time.
Every 1,000 years, the four forces of the universe combine
Burger, Pizza, Burrito and Taco
to form…
El Burgerito Supreme!

Troy Chaney
Journey

When I wake up in the morning
I’m happy to see the birds in the sky.
The bird’s chirping is music to my ears.
The wind blowing, feeling the breeze;
dandelion flowers blowing away from me.
The sun is shining on me to begin
a new journey.

Joeseph Smith

Flowering Yes

Green says yes
and I feel happy
pigeons flying up high
in the sky
say yes and I smile
and it is evening
everybody is going home
and I am excited
I get to play games
and be alone
and the whole world
smells like cookies baking

Tommy Fridie
Being Young

Applause is excitement while you blow away like dry leaves on a windy day. But it's impossible to fly. Running makes me breathless. I should grow wings immediately.

Tommy Fridie

Why

I'm going to write a poem about Transforming:
Angels transform into super angels to battle your nightmares
There is a guy, and he's a mystery he's a mystery guy he's stronger than nature itself My super angels will protect me against any challenge
They have forgotten to make sandwiches They need more knowledge

Ricardo White

In My Imagination

I keep my window open to see the moonlight
the breeze from the fan on high softness from my bed along with my smooth covers blue-black helps me think thinking of my parents and girlfriend helps me fall to sleep

Ricardo White
Cruising down the street in my 64

My life is invisible
like a Yes Day
Every time I throw a football
it’s a perfect spiral
Sometimes it can get a little crazy
on the Yes Day
I’m undefeated on a Yes Day
I never have been defeated on my Yes Day
On a Yes Day, I listen to NWA
I’m cruising down the street in my 64,
if you know what I’m saying.

Ricardo White

Tamia’s Routine

It’s time for bed
Sophia, the first nightgown on my body
Purple slippers on my feet
I’ve had a long day; I am beat
My pink nightlight glows bright
Just like the moonlight in the sky
My crimson bed sheets tucked nice and tight
But my ears are wide open
I just wanna sleep tonight
Turn off all the lights
It’s super dark, the way I like
Now I am ready
To count those sheep
Until I fall asleep.

Tamia Moyd
Everything Says YES

My YES day is playing the guitar
until it’s time for bed
blasting music, causing chaos
flowering roses in my background
watching the ocean splash water on my face
while it tumbles down my cheeks
sun shining bright, giving me clarity
YES, my hair cascades
like a waterfall on a stormy, rainy day
the branches swing in the wind
tapping my window
waking me up from a YES dream

Erica Bell

Celebration

I have heard what the talkers talk.
I celebrate myself on January 15th.
I pack my things in the morning for VC house.
It’s the beginning of something different.
I am 14, full of energy, always ready for fun.
I love to hear Ne-Yo harmonizing over the music.

Leaping into a field of rose petals
because thorns would hurt my skin;
Sweeping away bad memories,
so my new memories will be crystal clear.

Faith Thomas

Time for a change of pace

I’m done, not going like this!
Not this time, I’m not going to stay here
in the forest any longer!
These mushrooms are nasty,
the place is always wet
and the wolves and bears think I’m food.
I’ve been stuck here for months
and I have had it!
No more, the wild animals have pushed me too far.
The next wild thing I see crawl in this forest,
if they don’t have papers
they are getting a Full FI-FI Smackdown!
This is war!

Troy Chaney
Singing

I wanna make songs like “Beat It”
It makes me excited to dance on stage
The window to my heart is open
Challenges faced to make the perfect mistake
Nightmares of losing hope
Broken dreams sleeping in my mind for eternity
So let’s sing songs like “Beat It”
To delete insanity
Singing seems like the cure
To mostly everything, I think.

Joeseph Smith

Nasty Blues

Yuck, school lunch
Just thinking about it makes me ache
It smells and tastes horrible
The burnt look makes me bitter with no regrets
Nobody likes it at all
Someone should send them a note about a change
Maybe my mom’s spaghetti or maybe
my grandmother’s fried chicken
Never seen so much food gone to waste

Tommy Fridie

Well

Share a funny joke
Hear the laughter like lightning cracking and wind over the ocean
Send a compliment
Lift their joy
Delight
Sun bright
Happiness before them

Smile
Teeth white as snow
Snow White
Easy, simple
Recovers their day

Sing
Miracle’s voice
Music notes in the air
All is well

Erica Bell
The youngest recovery

From writing my solo band beat
to being in the hospital,
I have been through too much
over my stay.

From the shards of my album
found in my eyes
to blindness,
The crumbling nerves
found on my arm from a ceiling fan.

My wisdom tooth,
now gone from the flying stands
and broken, yet delicate, leg
lost from the fall of the music player.
All see lost and I…Am…Done

(Blink)

I'm alive! I'm ALIVE!
Wait, if I'm alive, then I just went a…
A youngest recovery in a dream

Troy Chaney

Squirrels

Squirrels in the ghetto
I'm making my song about squirrels
It makes me happy and
I dance at every party
Brown squirrels are the best
Squirrels, squirrels, squirrels
Their voices are so squeaky
and broken
Older squirrels have more wisdom
Hey, let's do the squirrel dance challenge
Swallow your acorns and dance with us!

Tamia Moyd
Being Young

Because you’re so old
You’ve forgotten:
  How to smile
  youthfully;
  How to imagine a possibility.

You say we’re too young to understand:
  The beauty
  of an inexhaustible earth;
  The joy of living.

But surely we understand
what you don’t:
  The difference between now
  and yesterday;
  The abstract tension of tomorrow.

You say we’re too young to understand
what we don’t know, but
we’re old enough to understand
what you have forgotten.

Christa Madikaegbu

Painting With a Man in It

I will make my body out of memory
Life of the afraid, unwanted
It makes me shout to the imagined,
to the thumping heart.
The vision to be a rainbow
is a lonely thunderstorm.

Saquan Short

Marcantony Pierce

Christa Madikaegbu
Dear hood,

Under my hood is a melting lock
waiting to let free a caged animal

Under my hood is a powerful mind with scars

My hood is dark black

My hood has a spiral window without a soul

Then my hood fades and I see a bright afternoon sky
outside of the hood

I move forward out of darkness
into light

I now regret being under that hood

At one point in time, I never knew
outside of the hood existed
but now I will say farewell
to you,
the hood.

Albert Gordon

Inside of me is blank
like no water under the bridge
like fire without rain
or joy and no pain
or twisting but not shouting
or crashing and not burning
and this thought is killing me softly
but I am who I am
so if the inside is empty
who do you think
I am on the inside?

Albert Gordon
I see a hand beginning to dig in the ground.
I see a rainbow door and I think
when you go through
you shall have happiness forever.
I see a polka-dot house
that has a mountain-looking roof.
I see a green window,
but is it green on the inside?
Are the clouds going into the ground?

Saebian McKnight

that world

This world
where the grass is actually green
on the other side of this world,
where people's skin color and emotions
are like Skittles, the dark side
and the sky is blue, actually blue
and everything is ordinary
but ordinary is not natural to me:
This
is
her
world.

Andrea Staples
What?

The moon gives us darkness.

Darkness is the absence of light.

I see fingers deformed
like a chicken finger;

the arms are long
the feet look weird;

their moon is too close—
It's red and jagged.

If I were on a mountain
that would make someone
think of what's going on.

*Anthony Martin*

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The President of War

The president of war has his rising voice
at the top of his kingdom.
The president of war was untouched until
that afternoon.
He was in his uniform.
His kingdom was filled with silence.
The outside was freezing with barbed wire
everywhere.
Every awakening, never-missing but forgotten
was seen, with eyelids through
windows protected with wooden boards.

The president was forgotten until this day.

*Vincent Wingfield*
The Mirror

The duplicate self-portrait mirror, alone in the darkness, imagined with a fearful memory that was forgotten.
Broken thumping heart like a crying scared river with a hard-chilled thrill unwanted, but touched.
Strong but broken fingers rub it with a crying shout.
The mirror remains hidden forever with a scary broken story.

Vincent Wingfield

May God Strike Me Down

I said a prayer that reduced me to tears;
God gave me all the steps I need to take to remove me from here.
I had a vision of this young man homeless, so hopeless,
I passed him at L’Enfant Plaza.
To get to work was my focus but in my head, I hurt for him so badly;
On his face was calm but on the inside, he was terrified.
A homeless single father looking for food for his youngest child who hadn’t eaten in days.
They are battling hunger, you can hear it in his voice that he is struggling to survive.
Everybody walks past him;
My heart is crumbling from hearing his cries:
“Please feed my son, he needs to eat!”
All I can think of is how hurt he is.
I couldn’t help but cry.

Aaron Henson
Who Knows What

Who knows if snails have names?
Who knows how feet grow?
Are feet violet?
Who knows if feet are blue and red?
How are clouds not in the sky
or a sun?

Some people wish skyscrapers
will come sometimes.
Do people live there
because of the look
and the funny laughter?

Jacob Jones

Self-portrait of the walking dead

Who knows where the dead man’s walking?
Who knows who the dead man’s stalking?

Walking across the forest of darkness
through the field of houses,
the nagging of spouses;

Trudging through little houses
on the mountain—
Don’t look at me
I ain’t countin’!

Jahir Gray

Melody of Me

I celebrate my strength
I leap out of bed in the morning
Perfection for breakfast
Prancing to begin a school day
The sky above me is clear
My head is clear
Thoughts of softness
I know I am cared for
and I shine.

Tommy Fridie
Who Knows?

Who knows if that’s a person under the tree?  
Who knows if that is a tree?  
Who knows if that is a person who is yellow?  
Who knows if that is the sky, and who knows if it is blue?  
Who knows the name of the things in this picture?  
Who knows if it will ever be dark?  
Who knows anything about this painting, or the green grass, or if it’s even grass?  
Who knows?

Reginald Lampkins

Unknown

That woman who looks out the transparent window into a soulless world of change and separation, she wonders what society has to offer. She stands at the same 90 stop every morning with a lit cigarette, waiting for that 9:35 bus. She always seems to get off at the corner of Georgia Avenue, silent, still, as she gets onto and off of the bus.

Through all the mothers who fight with fathers, and all the rowdy children, her expression always stays nonchalant and gloomy. The weather always seems to be a sun shining when she gets on, but when she misses one ride, the sky is gray and dull like the bus ride is nothing without this woman.

Christina Taylor
Lesson Learned

Yesterday, mighty death invited me
and I was scared
I didn’t know what to do
so my heart started to beat real fast
It was dark, and there was a full moon
There was a big skyscraper in the sky
Now, I have learned not to be bad
No more
So death just taught me something

Jeremiah Prince

Thanks for Nothing

Thanks for support and time,
Thankful for love and appreciation
I’m thankful for those things because they showed care.
Thanks for those fun times we have and still will cherish
Thankful for our past, uniting our present and future lives
I’m thankful for these things because without them
memories and goals wouldn’t have been created.

Thanks for kindness and collaboration
Thankful for our powerful indifferences
and troublesome imagination
I’m thankful for those things because they make our relationship work.
Thanks for your beauty and grace
Thankful for those things that can’t be replaced
I’m thankful for those things because of the way
it changed us, thanks to you
Thankful for your love and long silences
I’m thankful for those impossible moments to forget.

Remington Crawley
Lost

I am the president of my childhood
and I am trapped in silence
In a dream, and my head empty
traveling to a forgotten island.
I am all alone but I hear
rattles of voices in my head.
It is so freezing
that you can see the steam coming off your hands
snow melting during this morning
as the sun is rising.
then pop, suddenly I’m awake,
unmoved from the couch.

Emir Battle

Solo

I need to trap in the hallway
to keep myself safe
to be cool and play with my family too
It’s a struggle in this world
It is so hard
I can’t do nothing
and that’s worth something
There is strangeness in people
because sometimes they act weird
I have a lot of kin
Some are family, and some are friends

A’Quise Thomas
Who is real/fake?

Who is real or fake?
Poets are such geniuses
with their wordplay
and their clichés,
but some are frauds
who steal someone else’s creation
and disguise it with their creation
while all of their fans are
blindfolded by their trickery
covered with their blanket of achievement
while other unknown discoveries aren’t noticed.
Then they get their work mistaken
from someone else’s
not knowing their past work,
then years later, the real poets get more fame
and fake poets have regrets, feeling bad
and no one has sympathy for them
and there is always a lesson
for real poets:
Don’t give up.
Keep trying.

Isaiah Hunter

Real Illusion

This illusion almost seems real
and it’s scary, but it is
an illusion, like a vortex
in a vortex, inside a vortex—
Does it make sense?
That’s the whole point—
This illusion is meaningless
with no point, like paying for something
you already have.
It is like a nightmare
that I can’t wake up from.
If I had a chance,
I would have left this world, but
you’ve got to make the best of your struggle
when times are hard.

Isaiah Hunter
Thirst of Blood

First, trap him with a word of wisdom
then surprise him with your high intellect
then demolish him with your overwhelming strength
then capture him with his past of horror
then dissolve him with his own stupidity
then leave him abandoned, never to be found.

He’s missing, will be silenced,
like he never existed.
Then start the process over
with a new victim that comes for me.

Isaiah Hunter

Outer Limits

The earth travels in elliptical formation;
Galaxy tours, starlights and even zero-gravity sensation.
Interstellar universe, to be a multi-culti-verse:
Missions kind of joy,
rocketed airbags to deploy,
fusion jet packs set to hyperdrive.

Automatronic airwaves
as it is to have some lives
Indiscriminate, the dominance of your choice
Telekinetic powers, using only of the force.

Rejoice from within,
embrace the voice of the sin.
Hear the call of the slaughter—
Is it mother or daughter?
Hear the force say
I am your father.

Jayden Gray
Big Boss Man

I am the big boss man,
smoke you with a tan
defeat you like the Ku Klux Klan.

You aren’t frightening—
I’ll storm on you chumps
like I’m thunder and lightning.

Like a volcano.
Tell me something I don’t know.
I’m someone they all know
will get the final blow.

You’re restless, you’re reckless;
You’re downright feckless.
Finally, you’re done.
I’m not playing—shoot you with a gun.

Your eyes are bloodshot,
then it’s in Hell, you’ll rot.

Jahir Gray

Revolution

Revolution is freedom.
Evolution is kingdom and queendom.
Revolution is not violence.
Revolution is not war.
It’s peace.

In revolution, revolution is said to be victorious.
In revolution, it’s said to be glorious.
But revolution is a country of opportunity.
Whenever it isn’t, it’s complete insanity.

Revolution is all’s fair in love and war;
Complete resistance till it’s not like before.

Jayden Gray
The Life of Green

Green grapes
remind me of innocent $20 bills
jalapeno green eyes
on thick females
the fresh smell of green grass
keeps me sane.

Restless green paint
to create pictures of lonely reflections
Warning!
Let's not forget to wear your green hat
in the shadows of the leprechaun.

Shanay Lesane

How to get in trouble

If you want to get in trouble,
don't try to do a good thing;
express your aggressiveness
write on the walls
and make fun of the feeble;
Turn your words
into a poison arrow.
Smash what you have
Steal what you want to have
Don't be on your best behavior
Put others through a constant struggle
turn your sorrow into anger
break forbidden rules
Be sure to keep this in mind
as what not to do
if you want to stay out of trouble.

Christa Madikaegbu
Love Hurts

People see girls walking through 
one girl shows up, pulling moves!

Boy crushes on girl, 
girl blushes on boy, 
so freaking coy.

Girls fake, guys dig it 
for goodness sakes; 
Alternatively, girl sees boy, 
she likes boy, boy likes girl.

It’s bad blood, 
it used to be mad love. 
It hurts, it’s fake from below to above . 
Why, who cares? It’s fake love.

Jayden Gray

Untold Mystery!

I am invisible 
and I appear in the dark 
I’m afraid of the light 
People have seen my shadows 
but never me 
I’m kind of bitter, but sweet 
I shiver in the cold 
and melt when it’s gold 
I’m platinum, just like my soul.

Jermia Joyner

The Controller Struggle

When I return 
as a game controller, 
I will let the person play the game 
while using me. 
I will let the owner 
throw me around 
while he rages at the game 
when he loses. 
I am a PS4 controller. 
If I break, 
he will have to buy a new one.

Tariq Richardson
My Darkness Memory

My darkness memory is me sleeping next to a dragon with flame coming out of his mouth, as I dream of the countless sheep jumping over a haystack to get their food, as I change my wardrobe to get ready for a battle, the troops ambush my base and kill my dragon. As I take the last breath of my childhood days my photograph disappears in the light of a fragment killing the soldier as they restrain me from committing suicide.

Gregory Nickens

When I return as a basketball

If I was to be reincarnated, I would want to come back as a basketball, because I would be one of the objects of someone’s favorite sport. That object is for the person to get the ball in the hoop for a point. It hurts when I get blocked, thrown away.

Gregory Nickens

Kaleidoscope

Bears eating green hearts circles and squares fragments of gray twined in squares and circles green inferno flying jogging with bears into a pond— All you will see in a kaleidoscope!

Jerry Campbell
Who Am I?

I am made out of strength
I open my eyes to see colors
of green, flowing throughout the jungle
When the shadows fall,
the jungle grows quiet

You might find me swinging on a vine
headed for Jane
I dream in shades of red
like the flowers in Jane's hair
My heart jumps
when I see Jane's smile

I fear that I may disappoint
the animals of the jungle
as they trust me and look up to me
My very best friends are the animals
They are like family to me
The sound of my laughter
is deep, as it echoes through the jungle

I feel like I can do anything
when Jane's around
There is nothing quite like
the smell of her perfume
When it is time to rest
I replay the memories of today
as they are what I live for

Isaiah White

What I'm sick of

I'm sick of people turning on each other,
people giving up on each other;
I'm sick of people getting shot
and killed.

I'm sick of mother
and father arguing
and getting in trouble in school,
and people faster than me
so it makes it hard to catch them.

Savion Makle
A Hole in Forever

I burn past the memory
a train whistles for me to come back
I saw a dog once, and fell in love with him,
he wasn’t savage around me.

His foot skims the floor
like he has a grudge against these walls.
He counts birds…says it’s
a way of concentration.

The money was screeching,
and sirens were ringin
but knowing me, I gotta hold it down
for what’s mine. Before
he put his foot in that car,
a slow collapse of words
crept to his tongue, quiet hands
reach across that courtroom gate…

Whispers in my ear, “Can you keep
a secret?” “Yes, of course I can.”

His last words, in my room,
top closet floor box…
My last savings for ride or die.

Then the latch clicks closed.
My pain twitches and cries out,
I let him fall…

Now you can never say
I ain’t a rider, because against a sharp
light rests the definition of
#staydown, find really the way
we ride and die, I’m willing
to sit at the edge of a hole
in forever.

Myniah Sweetney

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Mirrors are a game.
They confuse you and they
are a game, so confusing
I give up, good day.
So confusing he forgets his name.
So confusing his brain
was tucked inside a suitcase.
So confusing my surroundings
are whirling around, so
confusing my sanity twitches
and cries out for help.

Bernard Holmes

Myniah Sweetney
Almost Lights Out

As the clock strikes three,
children get out of school
all rushing to the bus
to get home before it reaches
the point of no retracing.
Outside, the bitter smiles of
the kids sitting in the window
hearing in the depths of their minds
“Dinner’s ready.”
The mother stands in the doorway
counting her child’s sighs
which seem endless,
mother and son sitting at the table
as he stares out the window
watching the sky change
from play to PJs.
As the changes hit,
it all seems enchanted,
like a dream that never dies.

Aneshia Whitney

Alliteration

Irreplaceable ignorant inside injustice
Long leather laughing ladder
Smooth scar struggle separation sickness
Disappointment discarded drama
Evil empty eyes emphasize
Wasabi window wildfire
Behold burned blue-green birth
Chopped citrus candles
Aniya’s anonymous anger arrives
Franchise fragrance fully frozen
Violence vigils violent
Rich rolling rotten
Together throwing tomorrow’s testimonies

Ashley Stevenson
Might, Might Not!

I believe in my hero, and my own failures.
My own god and my own religions.
I observe my own failures,
I’m suffering but I’ll feel better later.
I am a mystery, I might be under
Your nose, or I might not!
To love is to be equal, and have
Observations of yourself.

Armani Thornton

ART

Mystery creation uprise to the world
But nobody sees if you take
The path to innocence in the dark
It will exist in the sunset
And I’m capable of observing its spiral
Golden soul in its unknown presence
And its dark shadow is the destiny
To its homeland.

You cannot defeat, change or spin around
Its creativity like an orbit, you can't
Change its gesture, you can’t conquer
Its colorfulness that it brings to the world.

To love is the creativity and passion
of beauty in this world.

Tavon Berford
Alliteration

Saquan, silent as a skyscraper
all shy.

A full moon falls to
Flame.

We saw a hymn is a him
or her.

Some are wordless, too windy.

Saquan Short

Destroy, Build, Destroy

If I wasn't this angry, I could
destroy a whole lot of things.

I'll destroy anything the guy brings.
Ice is my main element, it'll give you lice.

I can destroy rocks, bricks, blocks, tick-tock,
tick-tock, blow up the clock, you're stone cold,
I'll give you ten-fold, psych!

A bright star in the sky, in the galaxy,
a constant struggle tells me otherwise.
Gotta rise above it, a swarm of dandelions
won't be flyin'.

If you're lying, I'm dying, forget it, this poem's
written, it's smitten. Get rid of her.

A conquistador, take no prisoners. I'll destroy
and build the people you killed. Your alter-ego
starts playing people from the get-go.

I can destroy friendships, go ahead and scoff,
if you get to sneak-dissing, I'll pop off.

The only thing I can't destroy are fake
relationships, friendships, what a rip-off.

Jahir Gray

Gazing into the Universe

My gaze is like a mystery of creation
that's observed from an ancient
but regrettable journey,
and sometimes looking behind me,
things get pretty weird.
When I see at this moment,
destiny is outside of its shadow
and justice tranquilizes darkness
with a bloody arrow, but
the world as we know it will have an
effect with the universe again,
and all the creatures in the world
may never know.

Vincent Wingfield
Almost Everlasting

Almost everlasting things last, things don’t time never goes away,  
but imaginary friends stay until you make real ones. People take their 
lives like it won’t end, but some are filled with misery and broken delight.  
But welcome to voices of encouragement so make 
a moment of the heart like an intact photograph,  
a lasting delight, 
like, it’s almost everlasting.

Isaiah Hunter

Friendship

Everlasting friendship, what I thought for the moment  
When it ended it was just a thought in my head,  
Friendship never lasts, it’s just like a sample  
It never lasts, it’s just like a scandal,  
Inspiring people to be careful of who they hang out with,  
I felt bad vibes and how it makes me feel like a Snitch. Impatience on finding good friends  
But the only find is disappointment.

Isaiah Hunter

All of My Imaginary

Imaginary things for me are planets  
that I name. Another one is  
toys. Imaginary stuff is shoes  
with wheels, something else is  
a 200-inch TV. Mostly everything  
is imaginary. My dreams are imaginary.  
One time I asked my friend  
what he wanted, he said, all imaginary stuff. But, I said, Why?  
And he said because it’s  
way way way better than real.

A’Quise Thomas
Non-Existing

My philosophy is a mystery
and I don’t regret that
but I do regret that it has no
chance of existing.
My non-philosophy
is eternal, and that won’t change.
I believe philosophies are
difficult to explain.
Sure, I’m capable of having one.
I speak as myself, not as a group,
in my own words is how it is.
Philosophy is just a big word
that makes you sound smart,
but that’s my opinion.
I don’t know how I think,
but do you?
The world wasn’t made for you
to have everything.
What I see is unnecessary
and my gaze is clear,
wouldn’t you agree?
Sure I have no philosophy,
but I’m living perfectly fine
without one.

Albert Gordon

A Monotonous Beauty

My gaze is narrow yet unfocused
I step outside into a beautiful wind.
Looking down to where my inner conscience is in control
The presence of this overflowing makes my outer conscience
Say, “What a beautiful wind! If only it would
Stay like this.” I leave every moment in my inner conscience.
Everyone, monotonous but so beautiful. They wonder, how can I
Observe everything with delight, while I’m
Unfocused on said everything? If I speak of mystery
It’s not because I love it, but because it triggers
Tranquil monotonous moments, or perhaps
It’s a gesture of mine. What a beautiful
Thing life does, almost as that same rose that I noticed
Seven years ago. As we grow older, the beauty
Never ceases to change. To love is to have certain respect.
Respect is to love while loving yourself.

Christa Madikaegbu
**Fear**

Fear is like barbed wire coming at you like death hollow in front of you from hunger of eternity to forgotten death. A dust devil will haunt you till you turn into dust—Shark-tooth trolls will eat you inside empty rooms filled with darkness forever. Giant mosquitoes will strike with their dangerous, pointy tusks—Fear is death.

*Vincent Wingfield*

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**President of War**

The president of war has his rising voice at the top of his kingdom The president of war was untouched until that afternoon—he was in uniform The outside of the kingdom filled with silence the walls freezing, with barbed wire everywhere Ever awakening, never missing but soon forgotten with eyelids his windows protected by wooden boards

*Vincent Wingfield*

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**Loneliness**

Does it leave a mark when you Come back to me? No, because I’m stuck with you for eternity Always there for me when degraded Just the sight of me with you leaves people elated You and I both know to be sane is to be wrong Maybe that’s the reason we get along You’ve stayed with me till the end Who know that loneliness would be My best friend?

*Christa Madikaegbu*
The Secret Night

I was born in a dark nailed river
Entangled in the water and closed in the black.
I climbed to the secrets of a locked & broken mind.
What was buried in my bones?
I believe in the entangled and blessed road to be broken,
there I was left in the dark and light was just old dirt.
Now tell me what you remember from the broken one, when I was nothing to the gods.

Christa Madikaegbu

What is a Poet?

A poet is one who can write poems and one who can’t write poems;
One who mistakes words and one who mistakes himself.
A poet is one who believes and one who can’t make himself believe.
A poet is one who has told lies about himself and one who can’t tell lies at all.
A poet is one who whispers, saying that he is trapped and not knowing that he can leave from a tower.

Vincent Wingfield

Darkness

Darkness is like childhood but without the truth
It’s like being tossed around like a puppet
It’s like being ambushed by an impatient person
With shards in their back from a trash can
Blown up at 360 degrees
Darkness is countless & hard to escape
With its bitter cut weight like scraps of paper
It is the essence of eternity untouched
And unfocused with tremendous force

Vincent Wingfield
Dream a Dream

I'm the president of dreams
Dreams give hope & inspirational thoughts
to people and dreams give life purpose
but some negative dreams are what we call
nightmares—however, those dreams are overtaken
by those who turn broken dreams into ones
full of triumph—our minds are windows of opportunity
So dream a rising dream for the future!

Christa Madikaegbu

The Chef

Every day I see her
Bags full of groceries
A meal waiting to be prepared
But the expressions on her face are not those of hunger
or eagerness
but of anxiety and concern—she looks scared

When her phone lights up, the message that seems
urgent doesn't seem to phase her
She has bruises on her face like she's been in a fight
Her wedding ring scratched
She bounces her leg up & down
She can't seem to sit still
She's nervous

Her phone lights up
It's her husband
He expects supper to be ready before he gets home
Wouldn't want another “accident”
She replies faster than her hands can type
like she's excited
but the pain in her eyes says otherwise

Daizha Chism
**Anxiety**

It walks with quiet steps, watching its surroundings  
Anxiety thinks the worst before it has a chance to come alive  
Anxiety lives by steps—anxiety doesn’t stand tall  
It walks, head down with hunched shoulders  
Walks as if it carries the world on its shoulders  
for fear it will tip  
Anxiety talks with a nervous stutter like it has  
ice in its shirt  
Its eyes hang low, filled with glossy tears that don’t fall  
Anxiety bites its nails to the skin  
It wears headphones so people won’t talk to them  
even when no music is playing  
Anxiety’s nightmarish words are yesterday, today  
and tomorrow  
Anxiety is always jittery like someone is out to get them  
Anxiety lives in silence out of fear that the loud noises  
of the world will tear away their peace and sanity  

*Daizha Chism*

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**Grey**

Such a segregated color, put in placement  
to describe things impure and hollow.  
Grey, the lead within the pencil of the  
greatest masterminds,  
but forgotten when the Nobel Prize is won.  
Grey, the color overhead that drips rain to  
feed our crops or the snow to feed our spirits.  
Grey, with its many shades, walks behind the tall  
a shadow to mirror your greatness.  
Grey, like a uniform you wear, other opinion, but  
continue to do more without question.

*Daizha Chism*
Donald, O Donald

I am made out of greed, pride and anger towards
My own insecurities
I open my eyes to see a disrupted planet we live on
& how do I wish to fix it?
“Make it Great Again”
When the shadows fall I come out to bring fear to those who oppose my authority—You might find me Destroying homes & ruining lives
I dream in shades of red, white and blue
My very best friends are inner hate & false hope
My biggest fear is failure to show the world I can do it alone
The sound of my laughter brings nightmares to your children—I feel like I can do anything when money's in my pocket
There is nothing like the smell of destruction when done by your own hand
When it's time to rest, I don't.
I'm too busy planning to make “America Great Again”

Daizha Chism
Nigerian Princess

Up and down the rails she rides  
Shaky hands & jittery eyes  
Up and down the aisles she walks  
Begging for change from strangers  
Jagged and rustic shoes  
Eyes with enough past to tell a great novel  
Hands covered in ash  
Fingernails black like nail polish  
Hair wrapped like a Nigerian princess  
She's not from here  
Staring at her reflection through the dirty train windows  
She talks to herself—I hear an accent  
She's saying a prayer  
Her small sweater won't protect her from the winter ice  
What a way to spend Christmas

Daizha Chism

Hate

You make my skin crawl without saying a word  
You apologize like they haven't already been heard  
I just can't fathom the hate I have for you—putting  
this metaphoric spit together for you  
I despise your very walk  
I hope you choke on your words & lose the ability  
to talk—I'm tedious with this rhyme  
taking my precious time to describe the demise of your lies  
I'm fortified & you tried, but you're trying to murder what died  
Look with your eyes open wide  
Letting the world know of all your games—this game  
Of life you decided to play  
You drove me crazy with all of your lies  
Go back to an embryo, unfertilized

Daizha Chism
The Artist

Shoes scuffed like he's had them for a while
He gets on the train with the other kids
You can tell he doesn't want to
They push him—call him names
Talk about his clothes and shoes
“Can't you afford new ones?”
His mouth wants to say yes
but his eyes say no
They're about to burst into tears
But he holds back
They take his backpack
tearing it open, leaving his drawings flying around
the train—they step on them
stomping them out
What did he do to deserve so much pain and hatred?
No one on the train even looks in his direction
Avoiding eye contact to avoid the obligation to help
What a society
All he wanted was to draw.

Daizha Chism
**Hell Games**

See, now I am angry
So I'll spit flames like these are the hell games
I burn with an eternal flame
I spit fire like a dragon
My veins course lava—the lava is my blood
I am the original of my kind
So I suffer in my glory
My thoughts are immortal & will live forever
From my first word to my last
I exist beyond the devil—I just can't help it
I burn like wildfire
I have the bravery of a honey badger
I am hotter than a jalapeno
Hotter than lightning—untouchable
Look me in the eyes and know
You cannot run.

*Jaymir Wise*

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**True Story**

I remember when I was younger, looking up
to my older brothers, till
One got locked up and things got rougher.
The one who started stressing was my Mother,
Smoking & drinking her life away
Didn't even have the time to say
I'm gonna be clean the next day.
But things are better now & I'm really proud
of my Mom—she didn't just raise 1 or 2,
but 4 of her sons—she's the real MVP
My Mom is a champion.

*Louis Morton*
Toilet

One thing that wouldn't be fun
To become is a toilet
As a toilet you become rusty, dirty
And stinky—as a toilet
I would wish that people didn't use me
I would be crying every night because
People would come to you just to pee or poop
All over you 24/7

Jamari Carter

Sorry

I'm sorry for yelling across the room
I'm sorry for having an attitude all the time
I'm sorry for being mean to everybody
I'm sorry for everything,
for not writing a poem and
for not reading out loud to everyone every time
But every time I come here, I always
Get yelled at like I did today
What did I do for you all to yell at me
Every time?

Shaki Knight

Sadness

Paint first a person's memory covered
in darkness, hurt and pain.
Remove a smile from your face.
Pull your hood over your head.
Slouch down in your chair.

Confess my deepest fear,
Prisoner of my own thoughts, wishing
happiness could set me free;
The rain hitting the window pane
helping me disappear with every drop
that I hear.

Kevin Franks

Nice Man

I met a man once on the bus
who was nice to me.
He showed me how to catch a bus
and even gave me money before he
got off the bus, but
I don't know his name.

Kevin Franks
Lonely

Face
Mouth closed—Not smiling
Eyebrows down
Looking from side to side
Walking around the living room
Everything is quiet
Stay in the house
When somebody is behind me
I just jump
It's going on all the time
Raining on
wet slippery streets
empty with no people
Someone says, “Do you need help
getting down the street?”
I say yes
I feel like when it's dark outside
when the lights are out
and you hear gun shots far away

Kevin Franks

Music Mirror

First I paint on musical notes
In the basement on the wall
Sitting on a camel’s back
Musical experience is necessary
Next I would like you to paint birds and humans
Near a heartbreaking
Noiseless motion—I'm in the bathroom
And it's pink—I look in the mirror
And it's me—my room is red and blue
There's another person in my room
I don't know who it is, but I know
She's got a good personality, like me

Shaki Knight

You Do Not

You do not have to do your homework
every day—you can stay after school
and do your work.
When you get home you can play games
after your homework—You have
all the time when you get home
but don't get a D+ on your report card
or your butt will be grass

Shaki Knight
A Poet is a Prisoner

A poet has short black eyelashes
A poet has a thick moustache
A poet is thankful for security at prisons
A poet stays in the darkness in his cell
A poet is sitting alone filling the walls with lines
A poet dances to Kriss Kross

My Auntie

I sat in my Aunt's living room
on her big comfy couch eating Cheez-Its
She asked me do I like funny jokes & I said yes
So we started telling funny jokes & laughing
until my Dad said it's almost time to leave
I got my coat and I said bye
She said, “Bye honey, see you next time”
That is my favorite memory of my Aunt

Shaki Knight

Beyonce

Beyonce's voice is so loud that
the whole world can hear it.
Beyonce sings so lovely that flowers
grow in the garden whenever she sings.
She gets her magic from a pink and blue microphone.
Her songs are so sweet that people hear her
and turn into chocolate candy.
Her voice is shiny, happy and smoky.

Shaki Knight
Three Things I’m Scared Of

I’m afraid of spiders, snakes & centipedes
They creep me out to my bones
Spiders have long legs
Snakes are slimy, and
Centipedes are long and just look weird
Some spiders are big, with skinny legs
Snakes are long & scaly
And centipedes are long with 100 legs
I’m also scared of thunder, because it’s loud

Shaki Knight

Vision from a Rare View

When they sit on you
Your feelings are not broken
Unspoken—before I sit inside a bus
I have to pay a token
I abuse you in school because I’m bored
looking at my teachers wig
but I didn’t choose you—my teacher
chose me to be with you
so I scratch you up when I’m bored—I’m sorry
kick you when I’m mad—I’m sorry
Sorry I’ve been a fool by not understanding you
Just thinking that you’re a chair to sit on
But I realize that you’ve been with me since the
first day of school & every day since then
You are an unappreciated thing that prevents me
from being on the floor—Cold.

Mavelli Jones
Shark

I would like to come back as a shark
Sharks are big & strong & in real life
I'm a small and weak person, but
When I'm a shark, people would fear me
There would be free food everywhere
I would have thousands of teeth
I would be hard to kill
I would like to be a shark because
I think it would be fun

Saebian McKnight

I've Walked the World

I've walked the world, but I've never seen Paris.
I've walked the world, but I've never seen Antartica.
I've walked the world, but I've never seen Taylor Swift.
I've walked the world, but I've never seen a talking tomato.
I've walked the world, but I've never seen a tap dancing peanut.
I've walked the world, but I've never seen a breakdancing walrus.
I've walked the world, but I've never seen a sword-fighting swordfish.
I've walked the world, but I've never seen a unicorn.

Saebian McKnight
Leaders

The president of rising knows how
To uplift people and himself
The president of travel moves
Forward with his people
The president of barbed wire knows
How to harm you when you try to
Leave his site
The president of silence knows how
To act without sound
Like a 1940's silent film, and we are all trapped
In it until the end of their first term
No one, nor anyone, can speak
Their truth or falsehoods
The nations are all destroyed, because
All nations were not free—they had to
Follow the leader
No, nothing, but one person can fight
And turn nothing into something

Mavelli Jones

Feelings

When I am gloomy, my feelings
dry up like the desert.
For some reason it’s always a
gray day when it happens;
My eyes get filled up with tears
reflecting on my love to others and
their love to me, my achievements
and the many bad things I did.
My hands shake just like an earthquake.
My body feels hot, just like sleeping on
an oven that’s 400 degrees.
I feel like I’m walking on a bed of needles
bare footed, with blood everywhere.
When I’m gloomy, people say Why are
you pouting like a little kid? and
I hold my body like just like
my Mom did when I was
first born.

Mavelli Jones
Heights

I fear heights because
The distance from the ground makes me scared
I fear heights because
When I’m high in the sky and I look down
I know if I fall I would be a goner
I fear heights because
When I see everyone shrink below me
It makes me realize how high up I am

Saebian McKnight

Alienation

I hate being a human having these emotions
I hate waking up to go to school
People got me feeling alienated—un-powered
I hate guys trying to figure me out
I hate being noticed for nothing—I hate
tall boys—they make me feel sad
I’d rather be tall as a tree—It would be lovely to see
I’d like to be different—I’d rather be a publisher
or famous—I’d rather hibernate than go to school
I hate when boys act fake around me
I’m a planet, and have no one to bother me for a week
I hate school when students want to get your
attention by being annoying to you
I’d love to be a shadow—no one would bother me

Christina Cook
When I Was Born

When I was born
there were wonders around me.
Balloons with all the meaning of ache
and sorrow filled the atmosphere for breathless
moments of the unexpected.

Darkness stands up like a stature of brothers
filled with bitterness. I wanted a boy;
No a girl—as tension grows louder;
Regrets showing as shadows of the spirits
and from the unknown silence of
an old lullaby’s soul—there I was
at the depth in the orbit of nowhere.

Christina Cook

Who is a Poet?

I am a poet
I am thoughts in the darkness
I conjure the world with every rhyme
That comes out—it breaks like ice
My worlds shadow everything it does
It holds me like an umbilical cord
My poems are a mystery of creation
It’s frozen into separation of memories
Like a waterfall, it comes to me as a dream
Echo in the distance—it takes a solution of
Ashes, dirt and darkness to know who is a poet
Everyone is a poet through creation

Christina Cook

Pride

Pride is a fistful of evil—Pride has a blood vein of
unknown suffering—Pride has wounds that are
covered up
by fear and loneliness—Memories of scars that say
«Listen!» —Departed from falling leaves bred with
weeping
silence andemptiness, filled with darkness for
eternity
broken glasses, the bone-crushing feeling of pride
is a common revolution over & over again.

Christina Cook
Outside

Pink, orange, blue, black, purple kids
Square
Triangle
Trapezoid
Run, walk, skipping, fighting, eating
Deer
Squirrel
Wolf
Daisy
What can be found in nature
Grass
Mud
Trees
What is not in nature
Fences
Mailboxes
Bricks
I get half of a land of nothing
Less with a spirit showing
And the other half a house with a heart

Christina Cook

Me or Difference

I want to be remembered by my pride
I want to be remembered as someone who
Showed bravery—who is cut to pieces of
Regret, and dissolving promises, and shattered
Emotions filled with memories dangling
In the balance
I want to be remembered by the sun and the moon
Paper and wind moving out of sight going through
The storm as fire burning inside liquid
Turns into gas transforming into a
Necklace of planets

Christina Cook

Grass God

All day you step on me
But I'm here for that
I help you breathe
I help dogs when they're sick
I'm green and clean
I stay along the street
When you step on me I feel it
I cry in silence
I'm called the Grass God

Arman Thornton
My Love

Let it be cool
Let it be love
Let it be fun
I am hope—I am fun
I share love, but not my name
Our love is like a brick
You never make me angry
Our love is not ordinary
My love is like no others
My love will not run out
My love is romantic

Arman Thornton

Myself

My shadow shivers in the sun
It’s nervous in the sun—I get mad
I turn into an ox, like a boss
And if you hop, that means
You were in the way
I make my dog go into a frenzy
I like my steak medium rare.

Arman Thornton

Drifting President

Smoke everywhere—eyelids cloudy
But I’m headed towards the line
The clock hits 6 and a big gold trophy
I play until I get the trophy
I go home & take off my uniform
Make dinner and go to sleep
The next day I start drifting and
Keep going and going and going

Arman Thornton
Poets are

A poet is someone who wants to but can't.
A poet is someone who has a mind.
A poet is someone who likes his life in his own skin.
Poets would rather sleep through the night.

Arman Thornton

My Own

I make my own habitat
I make my own spot
I make my own food
I have my own mood
But I do not drool
What I do is rule
That's what I do, now
How about you?

Arman Thornton

Letters

Diligent dogs devoured Dunkin Donuts
and coconuts, corn & candy.
Randy ran and rolled across a rock.
Mandy makes more money than Mark.
The handyman is here to help.

Arman Thornton

The Book

I am a hard-back book and there is
nothing on my cover—it is boring
I was tired and wanting
someone to read me—I want to be noticed. But enough about me—
How about some Burger King?

Arman Thornton
Presidency

I am the president of Voice
I speak up for people who can't
I will make people who are wrong say
the truth even when they try to lie
The truth is rising already—everything
that was towered over and untouched
is coming out,
and to the girl or boy whose heart is broken—
Even if you feel unloved
deep down you are still loved.

Armani Thornton

Magic

Magic can be heartbreaking even though
It's cute—Listen carefully to the spells
When the person casts over you
Feast upon the questions
The person can be considering
Sadness is blue, though it is my favorite
Green is disgust—Yellow is happiness
The feeling is nicer if you share it
Red is anger that builds up when
Someone messes with me
Mix it all together and it
Makes you confused

Armani Thornton

Stranger

I see a man in a suit—He looks suspicious
I think he's going to work
I imagine he's bankrupt even though
he looks like he has a mansion
He might be a weird person—He looks
happy and bored at the same time
I bet he robs banks
Before I get off the bus, he looks at me
with a cold grin

Armani Thornton
Summer

Summer time is near
Strange fruit grows from bushes and trees
on the sunny side of the street
Everyone comes out to play
at the pool or the park
That's the solution when you get too hot
The tide is high when you go to the beach
Faithfully, there are trees all around
I twist & shout to get out of the house
to have fun once in a while
It was a good day today.

Armani Thornton

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Not Sorry

I'm sorry not that I had so much energy
that I jumped to Alaska.
I'm sorry not that I bought a white-winged lion
and released it in the school.
I'm sorry not that I turned all the paper invisible
so now we don't have to work.
I burped twice and farted—I'm not sorry.
I'm sorry (not) that I brought mortal food into
the movies—By the way, I'm a goddess.
I'm sorry (not) that I got caught up in the fun and
missed out on the free food.
I'm sorry (not) that my windows are so clean
that birds run into them.
Remember—it's not that I'm sorry—it's
I apologize, ok?

Armani Thornton

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l-r: Braxton Mathews, Anthony Martin, Khiddell White, Blake Mathews
How to Win

Paint a picture of your life
Talk about your 12 years in school
Talk about how school was hard for you
But you kept trying
Say they did not think you would make it
In school or in life
Say that I listen more, and say
I will make it out of Southeast

Travis Young

Big Buh

Her favorite place to be is her childhood
Her laughter is a blizzard of happiness, but
Her anger can become a strike of lightning
She had fun working at the Redskins football stadium
Her favorite kind of people to be around are
Exciting and creative
Her saying is, “Get it how you live”

Armani Thornton

How I feel!

I feel sad about how people throw things
and break them—Some people
use me as a target.
I feel like water dissolving when they
break me down; My tears are like
a river going downhill
flooding the town like a thunderstorm.

Travis Young

Hungry?

Did you hear that sound?
It’s the emptiness inside myself.
There’s an empty canyon in my stomach.
Sometimes it fades away, but other times
it sticks to me like glue.
It drags me around until dinner,
tugging and pulling me around like a potato sack.
My engine stops in the middle of nowhere.
The hunger is very powerful so
pull yourself up.

Armani Thornton
Poltergeist

For some, they look alive
But me—I can see the supernatural
People see clouds and planes
I see floating coffins and bats
They see adults riding cars & trucks
I see people riding werewolves and Giants spiders
They eat burgers and salads, but
I see them eating slimy brains
And human feet
And from the look of all of this
I may not even be on earth
Or am I?

Troy Chaney

Fist

Tired of being weak
Found in the mist
If you want me to fight
Feel free to feel my fist
My fist feels like a king
All covered in blood
I'll break your skull
And smash it in the mud
It's not just hard work
I also show dignity
But unlike you
Who shows your stupidity
So now you know
And here's a candy cane
Now run and scram
Before I put you in pain

Troy Chaney
Dr. Seuss
(A loving poem to my favorite author)

In the ashes we know
To the spirit of love
We miss you so much
Like a lost turtle dove
I miss that guy
Who liked to relax
I miss the orange moustache
Of my friend Lorax
When reading this poem
Filled me with hunger for lamb
But that changed my mind
To eat green eggs and ham
I miss you so much
And because of that
I will always remember you
With the cat in the hat

Troy Chaney

What Does a Poem Do?

People come up and ask me
What does a poem do?
I ask them—What do you think?
In fact I will say this to you to
Influence others too
Because you can make your poem
Do something to help you
To care for others
To change things
And to feel important to yourself
That's what poetry can do

Troy Chaney

Man of Steel

I'm made of strength—strong enough to
Create beams of light—I open my eyes
To a criminalized city
When the shadows fall my rivals & enemies rise
You'll find me serving justice to my foes
I dream in shades of family
My heart jumps when no one assists me
My biggest fear is a crystal that brings darkness
My very best friends are the greatest detective,
An Amazon queen, and the king of the ocean
I can do anything when filled with determination
There's nothing like the smell of justice served
Extra crispy
When it's time to rest, I think of a thoughtless past

Troy Chaney
The Lonely Table Story

Once upon a time
there was a lonely table
with no friends
no food on it—no nothing
The table man is the loneliest
table in history
Flies flying around him, whispering
that he was never made with you
On the table is a pitcher, and if you
look closely at the pitcher, real closely,
in the picture is gravy
and it's white.
The truth hurts, doesn't it,
Ms. Nancy?

Marcantony Pierce

If a Dinosaur comes to Hart

Let me tell you what I would do
First thing I will do is look at it
because you don't know what
it is about to do
but if I see it running towards me
I'll be gone like the Flash
Dinosaurs are dangerous
Better get a sign to warn people
But if it's not there, you're eaten
I wish I was like the Power Rangers
Because dinosaurs are unstoppable
See you later. Hope you don't get eaten
by a T-Rex.

Marcantony Pierce
The New Change

I come from true stories,
like light bulbs glowing
and I see grandmother.
She is blessed like the river.
I come from pine trees changing;
Born, a season to grow.
I wanted to go home.

Marcantony Pierce

Who’s That Poet?

The poet is me
Looking for graduation
Writing out blizzards of ink
And this ain’t a tank
See, being a poet takes hunger
But be careful, some people may hurt you
Some people may fire you, but
If there’s one thing my Mom taught me
That’s to never give up
The one and only poet, Marcantony
Has the power of memory
I take this seriously
I want to be the best poet
I am that poet
Because I mean it

Marcantony Pierce

A Bad Day

A bad day is every day for me
On a bad day I will not hold my rage back
On a bad day, don’t say hey, or
you will just have a really bad day
I’m happy when you’re gone
like listening to a favorite song
A bad day is just terrible pain, but
like I said it’s every day
It will never end.

Marcantony Pierce
October is my Month

October is my month because it hits
like a hurricane—creating memories.
I see shadows of people watching Empire,
but I’m not a fan of Empire—I’m a Skywalker.
So get with the beat, or get with the heat.
You can’t defeat me.
Oh here we go again—I win again.
I’m undefeated on one day—
My special day, which is my birthday
In October.

Marcantony Pierce

Nightmare

My real name is Nightmare
And with you I have a problem, so
I will give you a nightmare
I see the fear in your eyes—you’re not
Moving—you’re shaking like freezing
No one is here to help you
Trick or treaters banging at the door
You don’t open it—so they come in
Through the window—you think you’re dead
I’m so scary that even the haunted hallway
Can’t scare me—I make them scared of me
I’m in the valley looking down on your family
It’s not my fault they can’t see the sunlight
Happy Halloween

Marcantony Pierce
Cool Kid President

I'm the president of the cool kids
So when you see a kid that is cool,
Thank your president, Marcantony Pierce.
Why am I the president?
I am because I'm the coolest kid
in history—J's on my feet
So get like me—but let me get something
clear—I'm not Donald Trump
& I'm not throw up, so catch up
President Marcantony is here,
So prepare to be cold.

Marcantony Pierce

Thankful

I am thankful for not just the big things
But also the small things, like air
Because without air we will die
And for clouds and trees
I am thankful for all the small things
People love the big things, but
Let me tell you, small things count
If you never talk about the small things
It may just get ready to ruin my Thanksgiving
And if you do that, then I might just leave
Then I can be thankful for that

Marcantony Pierce
Peace

Peace is when people want to be cared for
When people want to love instead of pulling
Each other's hair—Killing children
That's the opposite of what I'm trying to say
Peace is when people sit back & laugh
When people eat together, sleep together
Even trick or treat together
That's what it is
Now let me live in peace

LaBrea Carter

Emotionless

Many of my friends have been
misdirected—Many of those ignoramuses
have been infected—We the people, the defenders
like Avatar the Last Airbender
Their downfall is their plunder
They'll be grounded from down under
They'll be soft as a sin
Should've never started to begin
We drove the streets to defeat
corrupted and courageous—take a seat
You'll pop and lock like the tickety tock
We're the hot shots from the boondocks
You're gonna get it, you stupid idiot
& leave the scene, you drag in skinny jeans
We're the twins, we always win—as for our friends
you'd be softer than sin

Jayden Gray
I come from shining lightning
onyx and brightening—a bottomless
black rock—a class of hard knocks
comedy Fort Knox—break their bones
send them to Auto Zone.

I come from midair bludgeonings
I come from impotent rage
threatened to run away—a stay of
black rage
Woke up sometimes, eternal wage
seething cynical cage—you wanna
take our dime, I'mma steal your shine
while you whine—we see silver lines
Italy, Rome—tell your memories stay home

Jayden Gray

Stinginess Apocalypse

We're the people who loot and plunder.
We're the people who come from down under.
Well it's blunder when stingy people come to
take over and steal people's thunder, well
it's takeover time—Go commit a crime.
That kid's angry and he's mad—He ain't big and
buff—he's short, chubby and sad—face looking like
a floor mat—body built like a raft—dude's so fat
he looks like he fell out of an elevator shaft.
Stinginess? I can put up with that.
Someone hit him with a golf club, hockey stick, bottle
or a baseball bat. Hey trick slick Rick, go get whipped
with a belt, a hose, a whip, a shovel, and a nightstick.

Jahir Gray
Unforgiven Misconception

I come from the black road—I wake up in midair
I come first in line—nothing but a road
heading four ways
I am above and beyond hunger and stupidity
What is the temperature of this humidity?
Like a god with ammunition
fully weaponized moods
Once again, floating in midair, I can descend
without despair—That kid is gonna get his
change of mind—Let a broken light go
through his head—This ain't showbiz
besides I'm a trendsetter, not a go-getter
and that's just how it is.

Jahir Gray

Defiance

Lumpy lies
Acid washed fingers
Venom is bitter
If she finds a
Way to slither
Through me, that's amazing
She can't read me
The pain
Is complicated
Barefoot bruise
Foggy hands are
Uplifting with no
Peace—Far away a
Candle slowly burning
Why does our candle suffer?
She's comin'—She's comin'
Defiance is comin'
The sun's tears
Crawl with burns
Of acid—Reality stares
Into my shiny eyes
That were at war, and
Now at peace

Myniah Sweetney

Her house

I come blessed like a river
Or a door that is closed
Now that her walk is old
But not locked
I come from howls sent up
All night and all day
They say I climbed to the roof
Looking for a black road
Leading to my Mother
Tell me what you remember
From the light broken on the earth
Become the bird I wanted
The house of a Grandmother is a
Smell like sweat

Saquan Short
I Am Me

I’m my mother’s
Reflection—a million bees
Stinging one’s emotions
Stay strong, take a breath
My Father’s Tasmanian devil
An owner’s grinning dog, just in time
For dinner—flex your intelligence
Knower of all—Throw his furious rocks
Into a tunnel & smash the broomstick
My Sister’s words
Her necklace of plants grows
Based on my water words
The balance in our relationship
Her fire burning inside
My Brother’s backfire—his hundred legs
Ginger and sizzling cries
But last, I am me
My words make you wonder
My voice makes you cry liquid gold
This time there is no imprisoned light
She is not shattered—the little girl
Who will always be herself is me
I conclude a constant struggle
I will make something
of the red rope

Myniah Sweetney

Caution

Farewell if there was actually true happiness
Gray is my bedroom wall color
Broken glass isn’t the prescription that matches
That girl’s heart—Caution
She has to watch herself when she says that
Love word
Listen baby, listen
If faces are scarred from barbed wire
Blue black wrists & twisted ankles
Twisted toy boxes & strangers weeping
Nightfall—ashes in repetition
It plays so many times
I’ve missed you for eternity, it seems
I’ve missed you—I’ve missed you
The voices, the boxcars & hunger
I swear you fear reality
Justice fears history
But I fear silence
We feel love with caution

Myniah Sweetney
Real Ones

There are more fake flamingos in the world
Than real ones
One day I will have a Bugatti, one of the real ones
One day I will have a mansion to live in
And will have all my friends to visit from all over
The world
I will have the love of my family
And I will have lots of smiles—the real ones not fake ones

Saquan Short

Happiness

Happiness is the key to life and to friends
Happiness is sunshine & brightness
With no clouds
Happiness is family
Happiness is freedom
Inside, it is kids & candy
Not being happy is rain
Storms, smoke and nightfalls

Wayne Rhodes

Stories

I will not return to the earth as if
I had never been born
I believe all the stories of who I was
A hard back book, a tent behind the house
of a grandmother who was not my grandmother—the smell of beer
bone in her hip strains now that her walk
is old—What you remember of her now
is her walk.

Andrea Greenfield
Remember

Remember Wayne
He was the man
Went to the NBA
Came back to
his hometown and
helped the neighborhood
the homeless people
The greatest man in the world
helped his family and
got them out of
the hood

Wayne Rhodes

Destiny

Believe all the stories of who I was
the first son to ever walk the moon
I'm afraid of dogs
I come from a grandmother who walks
the dead & shows me the light of who I held
Kiss the door, but not too soon
Black Secrets told to a mother to never be born
a god below the hoop
They say he went to the moon

Jamaree Martin

Portrait

My constellation was born on March 16, 2002
I cried like a spoiled baby—the one boy
On my Mom's side, the 3 boys on my Dad's
I was unfocused but skillful
Now I'm a shadow in the night or
A kiss in the sky—Next time you
Walk down the avenue, say
I'm the boss

Saquan Short
I hear that somebody’s children are afraid of water—that their Grandmother smells like bear and dead bird they smelled like they knew death and had a book bag break her back She sat up all night & day with a box of light bulbs beneath her arms—I believe the story because it was a hot season that I heard from a pine tree with a big tent behind her house so now, that bone in her hip strains to heal the fracture

Jamae Martin
Imagination

I saw Imagination
he was tall
brown skinned with blue eyes
had dreads that go from 3 inches long
to out the door
Imagination comes into writing club every day
and hangs out with everyone
but he likes me the best

Shanay Lesane

Glowing New Day

I come from a long line with a box of light bulbs
Fractured in my hand as I wake up in the middle of
The country along a black rock on a hot season
Drinking beer and reading a hard back book on
The roots of a tree as I get struck by lightning
I run to my tented housed to grab my weapon
Of nails and glass as I run away to play basketball
And sweat in the hollow on a dry night

Gregory Nickens

Kevin Franks

I come from a long line hollowed out
on a dry night—The first son in a line
Of someone else's children
Hungry and afraid of the elderly and the new dead
My mother said she would take me wherever
I wanted to go—it was dark enough
to bury myself.
Snobbery

Snobbery is a stuck up person that doesn’t care about anything.
Snobbery is a dust devil living under the ground.
Snobbery is a kid-less person.
Snobbery is the loneliest person in the world.
Snobbery is a human with a lot of courage.
Snobbery is a reflection of a white wave.

Shaki Knight

Life

I have the good looks of my father and the hidden mind like my mother—I have a glow like my cousin and loyalty like my brother.
I have the boldness like my aunt, but I also have the struggles like an unopened window.
I’m just like everyone, but we don’t have to have the window closed—if we open it, we realize life will get better.

Na’jee Ferguson
Entangled Words

They say I climbed to the roof
Afraid of dogs without ethos
Afraid of hunger and stupidity
When I threatened to run away
With a box of light bulbs beneath
My arm—I come from a line of
Someone else’s children
I come from hard back books
And tents leading to my mother
Yesterday I was glowing with no light
To heal fractures
I believed all the stories
Nailed to a pine tree
From my grandmother

Ashley Stevenson

Yesterday

Yesterday I was nothing but a road
Heading four ways
When I threatened to run away
My mother said she would take me
Wherever I wanted to go
I come blessed with kindness, like
A grandmother from the new dead
I woke up in the middle of the night
With fur on my neck, like a black rock
I’m from the hot season as if I had never been born

Aquise Thomas

Black President

Oh, Obama is the first
Black President
of history.

At breakfast my family
eats waffles with cream and
grits and bacon.

So I eat breakfast and it
was a trick, but I am still
home, still hungry.

Arnold Herring
Martin Luther King Jr.

Born into a world knotted up,
   He counts birds under the evening sun.
He forgets his name until he realizes he’s a king.
He’s narrowing down what should happen next
At breakfast he thinks quick,
the flick of the wrist burns anger like a stone to a stick.
Just for a second a slow collapse of words
   “I have a dream that one day,”
It changed a lot through time

Renita Williams

Prediction and Contradiction

Everybody knows that whenever you sit still, it makes people go insane.

The opposite of skipping class would be galloping the hallways. And some people be fighting.

Some kids don’t listen to teachers.

Because if that was respectful, we’d be preachers.

Arnold Herring
Collision

I land on the sun
I burn up on the moon
I freeze on the sun
The moon is so bright
The sun is so dark
The moon is a star
The sun is a heavenly body

Arman Thornton

When You Are Young/Old

Young people like cool new cars
Old people like classic cars
Old people like classic music and say it's good
Young people can go fast
Old people go really slow like koalas
Young people go to sleep slowly
They play their games until 12 or 1
Old people go to sleep in a snap
Young people don't remember nothing
They are not as smart
Old people remember everything
Back to the beginning of time
When baby Jesus was born
I would rather be old
My brain explodes like a volcano

Arman Thornton

What Lasts

Chicken lasts for half a minute
Life does not last forever
Earth lasts until somebody presses the button to blow it up
Family lasts until they die even when you argue with them, they're still family
Slavery does not last we already broke it
Love lasts forever like I love my family even if you don't show it.

Arman Thornton
Dancing

A power line falls
as I spin around, boxes of leaves
remind you of a ballerina.
Spotted by a sharp light
I tripped just for a second
It was only a trick.
I faced the camera
to pose for a picture.
She leans across to
show first one shoe
then the next
tiptoeing, singing songs.

Shanay Lesane

Opposites

Everybody thinks I’m mean
Being nice
My whisper sounds like a scream
I’m hungry and full
I remember to forget the unknown
Sometimes it’s hard to listen, but easy
My poem turned into a short story

Shanay Lesane

One day

One day I was sleeping
and my back did not feel the same
and it was weird
I thought it was the way I was sleeping
but a few minutes later
I looked in the window
to see if someone was inside
but I saw my reflection in the window
and I saw a wing so I did not tell no one
it was growing at a fast pace
so I found a high place to jump so I jumped…
then
I

I did
not
fall to my death, I flew.
I was amazed. A few months
later I told my family I can fly
and found out my parents know
all about it, and they can fly too.

Na’jee Ferguson
Current Feelings

Angry, mad, frustrated
Just want to punch someone
So much tension
Throw a chair, a box, or rocks
Immediately switched up on me
I feel so separated
No friends
No one to have my back
Have you ever lost yourself
to get what you want?
Well I have
I realized I'm in this alone
Missing the breathless laughter
the steady playing
and volcano of happiness

Shanay Lesane

Unexpected Darkness

My gaze is unexpected darkness
It is my custom to fight back
Swinging to defeat
And sometimes kicking and biting
I'm very good at connecting punches
I'm capable of ancient creations

I believe in myself
Because of my triumph
The world wasn't made for unremembered fights
I have no regrets
If I speak of justice it's not because
It's negative, but because it's tranquil.

To love is to suffer unwittingly.

Shanay Lesane

Hopeful

When I feel hopeful
My head starts to bow
and then my legs go down
My hands start to get in a near position
then my face starts to come down.
When people see me do this,
they ask if I am praying
I say no, I am hoping
and they just go away after that.
And when I feel like this,
this is what my body does.

Na'jee Ferguson
Opposite Opinion

Anger is happiness
Hungry is not hungry
Whisper is being loud
Remembered is unremembered
Gentle is being mean
Fighting is talking
Rain is water
Smooth is hard
Window is a door
Ancient is young
House is school
Roots are boots
Destroy my phone
Hidden from mom
Soul food everywhere

Marcantony Pierce

Staying Tall

I want to stay a warrior
I want to be truthful to my mother
I want to stay tall, because I have a big appetite
I will always be fresh and clean
I will never be betrayed by family or friends
Because I won’t say nothing at all
Never told a lie but seem to be a liar
I hate the rain, but I love the sunshine
it brings, after a storm.

Kevin Franks

I read your poem talking
about us young folks
and what we don’t know,
what we’re not talking about.
It made me mad as red.
You want to make it seem like you know everything
but you don’t.
I know someone that does—God.
God is everything to me
but as for you old people
don’t get it twisted,
When you talk about us young folks
you’re talking about the one
and only Marcantony

Marcantony Pierce
31 Flavors

Strawberry, vanilla, chocolate, chicken, beef.
All kinds of flavors that make up me
Chocolate, for my skin,
soft and smooth it may be.
I shimmer like diamonds,
too bright to see.
Chicken for my tenderness
not salty or dry
catch me in the summer
I’m even better fried.
Vanilla for my eyes
dark brown is the shade.
Creamy and smooth is how they’re made.
Strawberry for my sweetness,
I have soft spots too.
Even though I’m sweet
I’m a little bruised.
Although this isn’t thirty-one
I’m not the one to blame.
I just have too many flavors,
too many to name.

Daizha Chism

Shadows + Secrets

I burn the past with all my secrets
but it also goes into another world
where tomato vines feed the secrets
up into autumn with just a whistle
you can hear a dangerous voice
that gets swooped up by a put-outer
that is hurtful enough
you won’t be able to hear a voice
with a shadow
he forgets my name with every grief
we go through
comes passion and violence
thrown like a stone
through the church window

Isaiah Hunter
Transformation

All of a sudden, I can hover.
The hummingbird can sing a song to people.
A hummingbird has a short beak,
the neck is bright pink, the feathers are light blue.
Hummingbirds have long skinny tongues.
Hummingbirds are faster than a cheetah.
Did you know, a hummingbird
can sleep for twenty minutes?
Did you know a hummingbird can
stay alive for five years?

Shaki Knight

The Mad Song (Part 2)

They look mean, you look buff, just to pretend
when you got whooped it was a disappointment,
when you hit with a fierce blow,
you went down, now that was a show,
just because you have nice clothes on,
I will knock you out and throw you out the
window, then I’ll knock you out of existence
and make you decay, when you die
your death will be a mystery, no priest,
casket or condolence will appear,
you’ll be knocked out so badly, no one
will know you were here, and last but
not least, I will knock you out so bad,
I’ll knock you off the face of the earth, causing
your parents to have regrets of your birth.

Isaiah Hunter
911

I am in the kitchen
I burn the past
just like my hand.
My hand was burning like the evening sun.
My mom called 911.
Since I’m black
the ambulance was a no-show.

Mavelli Jones

Fire

Fire, fire, fire
You cannot destroy
its desire, but its desire is to destroy you
burn you, kill you, or destroy your image
fire, fire, fire
its boundless heat has no feelings
but you will feel it
Its wrath will let you hear
your blood spilling
your skin sizzling—
you’re grilled. You realize
you’re in hell.

Destiny Rhodes

Ninja

Whirling around in the air
They hit you so hard you forget your name
They use weapons you’ve never seen
Move around so fast you believe in Flash
They stay in the shadows
to keep their identity safe

Saebian McKnight
Young People

Young people can do somersaults and older people can’t
Young people can go breathless longer than older people
Young people can go to the NBA Finals and older people can’t
Young people cause more disturbance than older people
I would rather be young, because when you’re old
You can’t move quick and do exciting stuff
Young people can do more extreme stuff, like
Going hiking or rock climbing
Young people have more imagination than older people
Young people can actually remember what happened yesterday
And older people can’t
Young people can do more impossible stuff than older people
I would rather be young, because when you’re young
You’re always hyped and not asleep
And you don’t have to worry about being close to death

Saebian McKnight

Letting Go

I’m happiness on Earth
knowing that beauty is beautiful makes anger
like open windows that goodness is good makes remembered
Depend on each other;
gentle note and voice make the no window
together; before and after follow each other
To bear and not
trees to own;
to act and not
roots not lay
claim; to do the
work and let it go;
destroy satisfied for
just letting it go
shout is what makes
it stay.

Saquan Short
Different World

Two days ago a half-man half-horse came into my room

It went into my closet

I followed it and it was gone

As I kept on going I fell in snow

It was a whole different world

As I walked through something was running in the woods

I looked all through the woods and I didn’t see nothing

I turned around and a wolf jumped on me and bit my face

But I was still alive

My mother called me for dinner and I told her to look at my face

She said, nothing’s wrong with your face

I just started crying

Richard Walston

Unexpected Sunset

I walk away from fights because they are bad
Every time I beat somebody I feel sad
I defeat that person and darkness starts to form
Then I look in the sky and say one word,
The sky turns golden.
It was an unexpected sunset,
I woke up and noticed that it was all a dream,
Opened up the window, looked at the sky
And it was green, I asked myself
What’s wrong with the sky?
I blinked one time and I was woke.

Richard Walston
Being Young

It's because you are so old
people do not understand.
   But we are the young people
   uncompromised forever.
   Young people as the forgotten
rivers, inexhaustible into
the earth.
Surely we, whirling, know
what you do not know.

Saquan Short

Above the Clouds

Catch the light, it's such a beautiful sight
She counts birds in the sky as they fly by
The clouds whirl around all downtown
This past winter in school I'm a winner
The sky is blue while I make stew
and the clouds are wet

DeMarco Randolph

Mysterious Poem
(after Terrance Hayes)

I was in midair
my bones were entangled,
I have light bulbs glowing like ideas,
me sweating like beer,
afraid of fractures
and the elderly also,
the act of kindness,
like a bird with no expression
the dogs with ethos are kind
and blessed wherever
I wanted to go,
just like the rest.

DeMarco Randolph
Reflection

I'm a reflection
such a big mouth
and now flutter

A few lonely hours ago
you slept in traffic
skin jack-o-lanterns
now

Don't swoop, even try to explain;
Racing wind, even tonight the
trillion eyed shadow looks
at me.

Because you're supersonic
such a plummet mouth
and energy, your eyes
glow ecstatic

Saquan Short

Life of Garbage

I'm the garbage can and I eat sandwiches
but eating trash is far better than honey buns
hotter than the sun, unfinished housework
that's not done and I don't have a mum.
I'm a garbage can that don't play in the sand
can't blow me away with a fan, don't have
no hands, or play in a band.

DeMarco Randolph

All About What Kids Do

Kids getting on the bus
Kids getting on the bus to go to school
Kids twirl around
What kids do on the bus
They're beautiful like the rainbow
Kids jump
Kids play too much
They are funny but
Sometimes they can be mean

A'Quise Thomas
Run Away
One time I wanted to run away
My mom kept insulting me and
Kept calling me names
So I got mad and I went to my room
Locked the door for a while
Then my mom came and asked
What I wanted, and she apologized
And she bought me a lot of stuff
And she gave me a kiss

A’Quise Thomas

My Gaze
My gaze is clear as the eye can see
It is my custom to observe
and destroy negativity
And sometimes I regret the
creation of a shadow made
by the unknown me.
And what I see is the
arrival of overflowing Love
of my Black family.

Jamel Pettaway

Philosophy
My gaze is full of regret.
It is my custom to observe
my conscious mystery.
And sometimes I change
the universe’s sunset into
my own creation.
And I’m very good at unexpected
trouble that comes my way.
I’m capable of making the shadow
invisible.
I believe in change to destiny
but it doesn’t exist in my time.

Demarcro Tucker
Closet
(after Terrance Hayes)

I was nothing to become of. They say fractured light bulbs gloom from people's afraid minds. Hung but entangled into the dust of the locked door. It was shut, closed growing from the roots of a half chopped tree. As I run away from yesterday's broken hip. I would take a board nailed to my closet door. And shoot a weapon of kindness into the net. How beneath my closet can I be?

Demarco Tucker

My Philosophy

My gaze on rap is that it's dope Mysteries come wit it, and you never know It's a lot of people dat need some soap But rap will get you money even wif da jokes Spittin hot barz and spittin hot rhymes And I'm very good at stoppin the time I believe the style of rap won't die My squad walk in and can't nobody decline If I speak up on da beat it gon get killed Y'all don't even know da beat gon get illed You can take my rhymes but you gon get stealed The world was only made for me and my peers

Mykel Woodbury
Contradictions

I will be happy when Destiny is mad.
I will be full when Destiny is hungry.
I will whisper when Destiny is talking.
I will forget Destiny’s name, when Destiny remembers mine.
I’m gentle when Destiny is hard.
I’m fighting when people are not fighting.
It’s raining, why is New York dry?
Destiny’s skin is smooth, why is this other girl’s skin hard?
My glass is hard, while other people’s glass is plastic.
I’m ancient while I’m young.
Destiny wrote a poem, while I wrote a paragraph.
I planted a root that became a plant.
I destroyed a school, and mama replaced it.
I eat soul food, but Ms. Abbey eats American food.

Jamaree Martin
Destiny

I'm happy, you sad
I'm mad, you sad
I'm fly, you dry
I'm hot, you not
I'm living, you dying
I'm crying, you winning
I'm laughing, you made me cuz you choking
Choking on food you can't swallow
Ran to a pool I can't follow
Followed you to the pool
But I'm still startled

Destiny Rhodes

After School

People all around me, laughing
At a friend's house, playing the game
Just for a second we go to the store
I burn past the dog
I told him, can you keep a secret?
Into the stars cause it was night
When I walk home it's quiet like a stone
At home inside grandpa's arms

Wayne Rhodes

All About My Spiderbaby

I exploded with spiders
My body turned into a daddy long legs
My friend danced his way to the party as a spider
I saw a bug that talked
I said hey, and he talked
The bug led me unto the wizard of bugs
I asked, could you turn me back human?
He said yes
He told me the trick was:
Crush a bubble, lick an unbroken heart,
and follow your bumblebee dreams
I did as he said and suddenly
I began to change back to my human body
I was happy
And I was told never to talk to bugs.

Destiny Rhodes
Come Back

One time I walked away from home
I was lonely and in darkness
I left because it was darkness
I was forbidden to go back
and I felt left out
I felt I was not loved
I couldn't handle the struggle
So I came back
I felt confused because
I didn't know why I left
I should have told someone.

Wayne Rhodes

Indestructible

People can hold you down
But never beat you down
Love is indestructible
It can overpower you
Like your ego
Like a broken leg
And like energy
It's defenseless like
a million ants.

Wayne Rhodes

My Future

First paint the future
A basketball star in the hall of fame
Remember to use green
Use green to paint the feast of money
Abandon all bad friends
Listen to the important people in my life
I want people to witness my good skills

Wayne Rhodes
Unbelievable

I’m riding a motor rat
When I see traffic, it’s crazy
It’s unbelievable, not real
A gravity dagger
I’m so fast
If you try to catch me
You are trash
I’m like a buzzing bee
Mixed with Lambo
I’m driving on a planet
Drifting out of the sky

Wayne Rhodes

Walking Home

Walking home
I walked past a lady on the phone
She looked mad
So I knew she was not glad
She was making a lot of noise
I think that lady was screaming
I think she was screaming at a kid
She was having a bad time
It looked like she was having a rage time
Walking home I knew it wasn’t great
But all night long I was awake

Wayne Rhodes

Giants

It was only a trick
a trick play
that the Giants ran in 1998.
The Giants are good
Super Bowl bound
after they win a game
in the locker room
they clown.
On January 7th, 2017
the Giants lost to Green Bay
but they thought it was all a dream.
This past winter
we had a good run,
but as we moved on and lost
we played for nothing.

Anthony Martin
Proud

My face when I'm proud is happy
My hands are open and resting
I relate to a peacock
People say why are you so happy
I walk with confidence
I hold my body up and I'm confident.

Anthony Martin

Who Is A Poet?

A poet is an athlete.
A poet can be anyone
all you have to do is
speak your mind.
A poet doesn't have blood
in his veins, he has ink.
Never invade a poet's space
it will be thunder.
Poets are the tower of a castle.
A poet is everybody.

Anthony Martin

What Is Going On?

I woke up early, seen a cat, dog
I chased it around the house then
it hopped out the window
I was still chasing it but I don't know why
when I looked up Mars was there

The water turned white
Cars began to fly
Animals were mutated

I began to hear a song
but it was very low
Something was falling out the sky
but it wasn't snow.

Anthony Martin
Destroyed

When things get destroyed
you maybe won't get them back.
When you look over your shoulder
someone has your back.
That's friendship.
Most friendships never
get broken.
Most friendships don't
get destroyed.
That's how much they bond.
When you overpower a friendship
that's how they break.
Your friendship should be fragile
like a glass plate.

Anthony Martin

Surprise

I walk away from the people
that betray me, that hate me,
that are just so disrespectful
to others. I walk away from haze,
I hate haze. I walk away
from fiery walls of smoke,
everywhere it's hard to breathe,
all I smell is burnt crispy treats.
I walk away from loneliness
because it's sad, but boring.
I run away from storms,
thunder and lightning everywhere.
It's kind of scary, because of
weird people. I follow everything
I am supposed to. I follow my dreams
and no one can tell me otherwise.

Armani Thornton

Hurricane

After the thunderstorm
I come out with the blink of an eye
A power line falls when I come around
I'm slanting roofs in my neighborhood
When the evening sun rises I fade away

Armani Thornton
Weird
(after Terrance Hayes)

I come from a long line of dirt.
Afraid of running away from a weapon
My mother said I threatened nothing
But a paved road heading four ways.
Stupidity is afraid of expressions of kindness.
A pine tree is not like a river.
A line of gods awakened.

I, B, I.

I believe I will make a good world
and a life for people.

If I speak of god I will see him
out my window.

The world wasn't made bad
but people fixed it and now
they live in this world called Earth.

Sometimes the world breaks up
and things change.

Anger! (The Real Anger)

Happiness is found when you are happy
Happiness is forgotten until you get happy
Filled with happiness and fun
Silkworms are the most beautiful
insects in the world.
The nicest kids in the world love to help me.
I'm going to be the nicest girl in the world.
**Stupidity**
*after Terrance Hayes*

I will not wait to become a bird dark enough to bury itself in midair flying over everybody that hated on you. Just look at them with despair knowing that it’s only a few people who care, that’s stupidity, making people go on a killing spree seeing people get shot without receiving a master’s degree it’s stupidity, people robbing you, no matter what city it’s not just the adults but also the kiddies… kiddos, kids, there we go. I guess I’m just a lucky so and so, smart but never show stupidity

*Jailyn Smith*

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**The Unknown**

My gaze is at a distance
Even though I’m self-sufficient
It is my custom to walk in a mystery
This poem is going to go down in history and sometimes I observe the things around me and what I see is that the world don’t revolve around you nor me, but us And I’m very good at stuff I’m capable even though I don’t look tough Like a baby who was just born Like an eagle, y’all on the ground and I’m soaring I shine brighter than diamonds and pearls Knowing that now this is Big Jae’s world

*Jailyn Smith*
Kindness
(after Terrance Hayes)

He was a lonely child in a dry night
first son of someone else’s children
afraid of shallow things such as
water closets, weapons, & hunger
with stupidity, can’t relate with elderly
or new dead, climbing through obstacles
hearing howls sent from all night & day
lights leading to my mother from
through the night, do you remember
her fractured bones, coming from the dirt
road leading to the paved one,
will not return as if not born, will not
be a bird to bury in midair, where did
you bury my dog, in what tree
are the bones entangled, come blessed
like god changing his mind, kindness
mother said would take me
wherever I wanted to go.

Maliquia Hawkins

What is Home?

Paint home, the
feeling at home.
What are your thoughts?
Home is more than
a house, a dark hole
or a place to relieve stress.
Keep a memory of
it. How do you paint
home? The same way
you think of it. If
family is there then
that’s home, the power
to feel what you feel.
You own it. You
can put everyone out.

Cameron Deboise
I was up all night
Afraid of how my life might end
Will I die with no love
Or will I die knowing I had a friend?

Never once had a father
so I chose the wrong path on my own
I did have a cousin
But he sang the song in the same tone

I chose to play ball
So I can make it out
But I did wrong so much
When people hear my name they don’t even know
what it’s about

This isn’t my life
But I’m just saying
You will never know
Who might grow up not being a man.

Robert Green
Opposition is Better!

There is always a force or signature within the universe. But for every force in the universe, there is an equal and an opposite. For every matter, an anti-matter. Everyone holy, someone demonic. Have a dream house, looks like someone copied that one. Favorite amusement park? Re-new that idea. Greatest gaming weapon? Re-skin it. You get what I mean, there’s guys and gals out in this crazy mixed-up world who are just being copy-cats. But besides, I can do that too… BETTERRRRRRRRRRRRRR!!!!

Troy Chaney

Blocking

What does a wall do? It just blocks a path in your way. I don’t care who built the wall, Imma bring it down. That brings me to something else, pros and cons. It likes being a huge pain because you can’t go through it. But you can bring it down with a wrecking ball, a huge hammer or a jackhammer. It’s very weak to all of that. You can even say, “It might brick on ya!” Eh! Ehhh!

Troy Chaney
Nervous?

I’m shaking, head to toe
leave me out or
leave me alone
Talking despite
Me and joy, we’re not alike
Think hard or
think proud
People with me can’t think aloud
Joy is off but I’m no fear
Most people have me for the year
I’m not furious so I’m…

Cameron Deboise

RAIN.

B.irth of a thought, able to create
the spark for the unit.

R.etroforming the unit, creating the
entity of its structure.

A.cknowledge the information given to
the brain, to use it in life’s problems.

I.nformatize the knowledge, to create
more thoughts and form them to more.

N.ow for the finish, use your
ability to help the world become
a better place for all.

Troy Chaney

Rainbow

If I describe how a rainbow
can become your feelings and thoughts,
I can describe it in six ways.
Red, your own mini
volcano of anger.
Orange, an earthquake
of agitation.
Yellow, a mini sun
of happiness.
Green, your grassland of peace
and sense of calm.
Blue, your lagoon
of tears and sadness.
And purple, your twitchy
and crazy soul.

Troy Chaney
The Old, The Young, and Ms. Nancy

You are never too young to be old,
You are never too old to be young,
And you are never too old to be Ms. Nancy.
Uncompromised, you are never too young to be fancy.

If young Dolph made it to falsehood,
The likelihood would be the oldies into newbies,
If you want that on your conscience, look
for momentum, Confucius.

You old people say get off my lawn,
We kids say after dawn.
Methodical language, deaf vanquishes
as we anguish with advantage.

The Young and the Ageless, or the
Old and the Restless. Either option you’re
helpless. The elderly know this. You are
never too young to fly. And you are never
too old to question why.

Jayden Gray

Miscellaneous Impossibility

All of a sudden, these miscellaneous
events kinda happened. When you jump
you can fly. When you walk, you question
why. When you turn, you can slide. And
when you holler, you can glide.

The stroke of midnight,
look in the mirror, self-consciousness.

You get stronger every night.
Mesmerizing at sight.

Metamorphic, microscopic,
Toss the topic, miscellaneously
I'm anthropomorphic.

Jayden Gray
Memory of Remembering the Reminiscence

Have you ever felt like you felt unnoticed or been forgotten? Well let me tell you the memory I’ve had, us being forgotten, left out of what the girls tell our friends.

It never ends! Attention, the recognition, outer dimension, the cosmology constellation from the ground up, but can’t shut up.

Another memory I’ve had is being here in Writing Club, surrounded by the people I love. I may hate school, but I do love Writing Club. Like it’s childhood, but the future world.

The best memory worth reminiscing is us hanging out. The worst is a school with fakes and bluffs. Go get that on your conscience now, you maroons.

Jayden Gray
The Whole Picture

First of all, out of all the seasons, the years, the months, the weeks and the days, it’s just one bizarre episode after another.

We all have our fondest memories from our past, present, and the future. In statue, from childhood reminiscence to laid back adolescence to memory lane.

We win some, we lose some, cheaper by the dozen. The longest memory of all time is us friends hanging out like Good Times. Forget the bad times.

All’s fair in love and war, but one you shall never forget. You ruined our yesterday, the Past. You ruin our evening and morning, the Present. And if you ruin our good times, we’ll ruin your future.

Jayden Gray

Tattoo 2 Twinz

Riding down on my motorcycle dirt bike, about to take flight, I wonder at night. Seagulls, is this legal? With my knuckles tattooed with the right saying “COOL” and the left saying “TWINZ” What does that all mean? We win, that’s how it’s been.

Welcome to Life vs Death, minus the breath. Gold T chains, Denim Jackets and jeans, gloves and boots black. Twins are back, jack! It’s the little things that don’t last. Broken voices, blast from the past. Tattooless emerges ruthless. Highlights lasts in spotlights. Above all things that last, it’s not the last life fast, ignore the past, to future yonder. It’s all infinity and beyond.

Jayden Gray
The President of Imperviousness

I am the invincible. I am the invulnerable! Say goodbye to the Queen of No! and say hello to the King of Yes! I hear voices in my head, there is no rest, they cancel me, it'll be a pest.

I'm the President of Imperviousness, better known as the Ultimate Lifeform. Smarter like Obama, better than Donald Trump the know-it-all louse, if you step out of line, you gonna get housed.

In the Cool Kids Utopia, I make the rules of promotional jurisdiction. Yes to music Yes to phones Yes to video games and yes to no school.

We're the Kids of America of this Yes! Movement! From Hollywood to LA, Jacksonville, Mississippi to California, Texas. From triumphant Saints Row to Galaxy Wars Oppress. The Kids of America will rule with an iron fist.

Jayden Gray

Philosophy vs. Conspiracy

My gaze is as clear as the nighttime atmosphere. It is my custom to bust them to keep them from here I have a philosophy that no matter how bad things turn out, they will always turn good in the end. Conspiracy theory proves they will die like Big Ben. You can't judge a book by its cover. And sometimes talk crap about another.

What I see? I see eat, sleep, conquer defeat in my future, you know? But heck you know what they say, YOLO. As in you only live once. But you know, we ain't the dumbest of the bunch. Because of abstract thought. Not because of raindrop top drop. To love is to know when to stop.

Jayden Gray
My Walks

I walk away from doubt of the emotions I see,
weeping children crying under a stone.
I walk away from the grieving
and replace it with hope.
I follow when the wind stops moving
you can hear like a moving of boots
but I’m also in a dust of hidden memories.
I walk away until the nightfall of silence.
I follow the souls of emptiness.

Christina Cook

Changes I See

Things that change over time
the past changes through life
what else changes?
Our creation changes to what we see
Our voices change to our moods
As a flower changes its creation
An artist changes the view
of how we want to see things
A disappointment becomes happy and glorious
A sarcastic wittiment can turn into a joke
Or expressions of pain can turn into suffering
A shadow could be destiny or chance.
An unremembered quote can be
your favorite words to say.

Christina Cook
Contraprediction?

Anger is joy, hungry is fed up when whisper is noisy to the power of ten. Remembered is amnesia, gentle is frictionless synesthesia.

Fight is pacifist, out rain is wistless mistfulness. Smooth move = groovy moods. Hidden = sound, lost = found.

Corrupted data lost and abound. Ancient ruins, fast and around. Destroy the build, if roots were stilts.

Icebreaker, poison, fire emblem antidote. Venom sacrifice makes the life of vice. To live is to die love is to learn. Why not once, but thrice.

Jayden Gray

As I Walk Away

I walk away
into the sweet,
silent darkness of the night
with a scar of regret.
If you follow me, you'll be forever unknown to me, a person only knowing to deceive.
An overflowing disappointment locks itself into my soul with only you forever with the blame.
As I walk away with no farewell to you a gleaming happiness fades into my soul.

Christa Madikaegbu
Wow We Are Too Old to be Talking About This

I can’t speak for young people
I am old
I can’t be hype for the excitement
I’m too old,
I could break a hip.
When we rock on to music
we move our heads back and forth
we think we are dying.
We young people can hear the forest
We old people need a hearing aid
We young people feel expressions
and are happy
We old people can’t feel expression
and we are always bitter.
We young people can hear better
than the old
We old people need to yell
to hear what you say
When all we said
was “Hi.”

Friends of Contradictions

You and I are like fire and ice.
Your joy is a changing flame,
yet mine is always the same.
You say the window is open
but the window isn’t there.
Your beauty is class
while I’m fragile glass.
Yet the disturbances
never last, and pain
is abstract.
We saw the world together
but we’ve never been outside.
We are just two contradictory beings,
you and I.

Christina Cook

Christa Madikaegbu
It's Not Destructable, It's Innovatable

I know my knowledge is indestructable from addition and subtraction to 35—7. My teachers say that pink in Spanish is rosa while others say it's rosado. My knowledge is never being destroyed, it's transforming, evolving, in my mind, my memory is an abyss full of information. The knowledge I have lets me know, amber is not only a mineral, it's also what insects are trapped inside, and that George Crumb made potato chips. You can say my knowledge isn't destructible, it's innovatable.

Christa Madikaegbu
**Proof**

The Devil is a lie and God is the truth, the truth ain’t really no good unless you got the proof.

See proof ain’t the proof that shows all the truth. People tell you a thing and say it’s the truth, but unless you see it or touch it there’s no proof.

A dog is a duck, you don’t got no proof.

A man is a fish, you don’t got no proof.

We all live life, now that’s the truth.

Obama was a good man and that’s the truth. Trump says he’s helping America yet there’s no proof.

Truth lets us know what’s going on, Proof shows us what’s really happening.

Everybody can tell the truth, but unless you can show the proof, then it’s a lie—

That’s truth.

*Lawrence Offutt*

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**The Following**

I follow silence into the dark sky
I explore and realize that I’m beginning to be uncompromised with no difference of momentum. I follow magnetic energy upon my final slaying, with the fear of pride.
I tear apart my silence, divergent matter of time
I die long and hard, but as long as I die,
I will slay the sky.

*Vincent Wingfield*

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**Life**

Life is restless, backwards, it’s to be torn apart or not torn apart. Life is like sunrise and sunset but broken twilight with life and death just fading away into heaven to meet God.
Life is more of death, but less complicated with no patience, broken misery, and a bad and horrible sunset.

*Vincent Wingfield*
The Last of Us

Games will never last, cards will never last. 
Friendships will last, friendships won't last. 
Places will change, rooms will change.

Not the armor and range. 
Tattoos never last, birthmarks never last. 
Trees never last, plants never last.

What a delight, this ain't the sports highlights. 
Food never lasts, drinks never last, 
video games never last, desserts never last.

Lights change, twilights never change, 
fake people change, voice will always change, 
It ain't that strange.

Buildings won't last, houses won't last, 
cars won't last, trucks won't last, 
vans, bikes, scooters, skateboards, snowboards, motorcycles and other vehicles will and will not last.

Relationships always last, relationships will never last, relationships change, they won't change, it's just a blast from the past.

Jahir Gray

Abstract Thoughts

Abstract emotions to the left
More abstract emotions to the right

Cause they are left to be out of sight, 
and that the paint colors are more than bright.

Emotions of happiness, sadness, fear and anger, the abstract pulls you up a clothes hanger.

Purple jealousy and green envy. 
Blue, yellow, red, orange, brown, pink, magenta, lavender, fuchsia, shout out all the colors in your mind and leave 'em empty. Technicolor, and multicolor and black and white'll give you a fight.

Jahir Gray
How to Describe Your Personality with Feelings and Emotions

When you are feeling any kind of emotion, you could be stomping the ground if you're angry, drifting your arms if you're sad, or if you're happy or mad.

People might say, “What's wrong with you?” or “Is there anything that I can do?”

You can relate to a ball of fire, or a thunderstorm or a bright sunny day, a snow storm, or blood dipped in deep blue sapphire.

You might be smiling or frowning or clenching your teeth whilst you are drowning.

You might hug yourself, pause, for a cause for applause, or kick yourself to the curb or grow some herbs, this ain't “Phineas and Ferb,” your colors are of translucence and iridescence, so why don't you grow up and lose all your childhood adolescence.

Jahir Gray
**I Can't Be Destroyed**

I can't be destroyed even if you tried to shoot me with a poison arrow on my chest cuz I'm a survivor and a hero walking through these obstacles and it's a little fledged I regenerate my body using tunnel vision.

I can't be destroyed in any type of shape, form, or pattern, I just put the pieces together like it's been scattered.

I can't be destroyed, I'm too hot on fire, I got the heart of a lion, the eye of a tiger, the constant struggle is my desire. I defeat these battles like I'm Floyd, and just like a cockroach I can't be destroyed.

*Tavon Berford*

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**Miscellaneous Activity**

When the smoke cleared, I saw nothing but impossible strategy. Strategy, oh, what tragedy. If you walk the fountain, you can jump over a mountain.

Together we’ll remain a story, powers and glory, rain showers live up to 24 hours. If I’m too overpowered, then you are a coward.

If I walk through walls, fly and can brawl, then get ready 'cause you’re in for a fall.

I fight to eliminate and obliterate, super-sonic super-shadow. I'm the beast incarnate.

*Jahir Gray*
Prediction vs. Contradiction

Anger makes people so weak, that they can't keep their heads in the game.

A whisper would sound like the wind breezing through a flame.

Water cannot freeze into stone, the fight I hate to postpone.

The glow keeps on glistening, your time is up, so start listening.

I hate to officiate, I'm the beast incarnate. I'm a little curious, I'm fast and furious.

Mess with me and it's gonna get serious.

Jahir Gray
Busboys and Wreckage of Mass Destruction

In the middle of the background
In the middle of nowhere, here and there,

lies an unwanted vehicle left out on its own, abandoned. Its eyes are two broken headlights. Its whole face is hidden, like a tornado hit it.

You've ridden it, it likes to sleep in the day and drive around at night.
It's afraid of nothing. He gets angry when people make fun of him and throw rocks, he'll drive you away and run you over.

He thinks that most people who use it are awesome and cool. His greatest request is to be a regular, normal, brightly-colored, undismantled school bus. He is lonely, but he's very happy to be lonely.

Another one of his greatest wishes is to control thunderstorms and beams of heat and lightning, and to have the ability to clothesline you and pummel you and stomp you and crush you.

Does he have a reformer? No. Ladies and gentlemen, here's your newest transformer.

Jahir Gray

A Poet is a Poet

A poet is a poet
A poet is like a wizard who causes a blizzard

A poet might cause a blackout, beyond a doubt. He might light a candle in the fireplace and burn it down without a trace.

A poet might solve a solution with a resolution, and put an end to this evolution.

Jahir Gray
You Cannot Destroy!

You cannot destroy a weapon
You cannot destroy my hope
You cannot destroy my joy
In these darkened times
You are the light that guides me on
The warmth that keeps that chill away
The sound that sparks my hope
The joy that fills my heart

Xavier Spruill

Crazy Things

I gave people a bet but broke it
but it wasn't broken
A boy swallowed a comb
but he wasn't choken
I looked in the mirror but
there was no reflection
I went to see an action movie
but there was no action
A man was supposed to get a blood shot
but he got a blood clot
Your town gets melted because of a volcano
but it does nothing but mess up your brain though
You wish something on a wishbone
and all you get is a pile of stones
We all know how people smoke
and now all cigars are on a boat
Now people regret all this stuff.

LaBrea Carter
Nothing Lasts

Everything in this world never lasts
Everything in dis world gets
broken up like glass, even your
family will turn their backs on
you, just like the past, so
I just move on forward but I
don't move fast.

Everything in dis world never stays
the same, I might as well call
y'all pennies, nickels and dimes
cuz everything changes

Everything in dis world never lasts
Everything in dis world
just changes so fast. Everything
in dis world never lasts, I guess dis
is boxing, but everything never everlasts.

Tavon Berford

My Philosophy

My philosophy is my dreams
And my dreams are to finish middle school
then go to high school
then graduate from high school and
go to college and play football
or basketball and then go to the pros.
Then when I graduate from college
I'm going to be a football or basketball coach.

Xavier Spruill
War of Stars

Galaxies and bigger galaxies all fighting each other just to shine.

It's normal but unlikely for them to combine.

Galaxies floating all over space. They all have stars, lots of stars that play as the soldiers.

Boom! Crash! Boom!

The war is starting to really heat up. Every punch scratch, kick, and shot counts.

The war of galaxies, the war of stars. It's tragic how much damage they do and how much trash they leave behind.

Galaxies and bigger galaxies all fighting each other just to shine.

Stars and bigger stars all wanting to survive the war.

Tatiana Pierce

Writing

My custom is to wrote and do things alike. Sometimes I draw of things I saw.
The world can change, but people still need their range.
Leave the past behind and meet your destiny.
To love is to care about your ancestors, because they made this world.
You can only change this world.
You do not own the world, it's not like you can loan this world.

LaBrea Carter
Possibilities

Steady possibilities apart from troublesome people.

Impossible possibilities that reflect tension at times.

Windy possibilities that redeem durable abstract days.

Tender moments that make life more magnetic.

Possibilities that never quiver.

Tatiana Pierce

She

She’s Mean, mean as they come.
She’s beautiful, as beautiful as a princess.
No wait, my princess.
She’s hard working, a boss in training.
She… She got her own, yeah I said it—her own and she ain’t looking for no hustler…miss independent with the world’s best smile.
Goofy with the message that says “you can’t change me”
Insecure but stable, able and willing. She’s mine.

Joquan Knight
January, Part 2

V.
This is continuing from December
After New Years, some people are passed out, or maybe drunk.

VI.
To me, this is any ol’ day.
You will wake up the same, get dressed the same
and do everything the same—nothing really changed.

VII.
January is supposed to be the month of starting
your new year revolution. “Eat healthy”,
“Work out more”, or even “Make more friends.”
They say it, but only do it for a couple of days.

VIII.
I would call them liars, but they are just following the trend.
This is similar to December: You will wait for Santa, then
everyone will turn around and make a new year revolution.

Daisha Wilson

How to not get in trouble

No hitting.
No inappropriate language.
Do your chores.
Be respectful to everyone.
Go to school on time.
Do my homework.
Don’t skip class.
Always be nice.
Don’t talk unless spoken to.
Be a great kid.

Joevon Smith
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