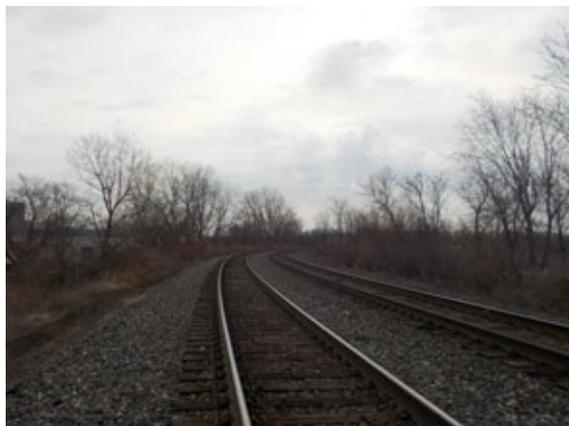




Where We're At



**Photos and poetry
by young artists**

Where We're At
Photos and poetry
by young artists

El Museo Francisco Oller y Diego Rivera

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El Museo Francisco Oller y Diego Rivera
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Foreword

Becoming Cultural Ambassadors through the Arts

Educating Beyond the Borders of School is designed to supplement students' education by providing materials and teaching technical and digital skills for photography and encouraging and promoting creative writing. These skills are highly transferable and will be used in multiple ways in their daily lives. Beyond these academic concerns, we also have some additional goals in mind.

Several years ago, I had the pleasure of meeting a number of newly arrived refugees from the Karen (Burmese) community. It was a time when Buffalo became known as a hub for resettlement. Over a period of two years, I began to see some of the struggles my friends had with

housing, accessing transportation, getting fresh food, and their experiences with education. New immigrants and refugees of all nationalities and ethnicities were being settled in communities, often marginal ones, alongside American minorities who were experiencing their own struggles. And sometimes, in their schools and neighborhoods, these competing struggles would clash.

To change this and smooth the resettlement process is a huge task and one that requires input from different communities as well as the institutions that serve them. No individual, community or institution alone can fix this. I wondered how and in what way I might be able to help. I began by conducting a year-long research study that collected the stories and narratives of twenty-five

Karen adults and students, along with various interviews with teachers and administrators. After a careful review of these conversations, certain common themes began to emerge.

It occurred to me that the arts may be able to assist in some small way. Through photography, students must take time to observe their lives, their communities, and others'. Hopefully, through this process of visual investigation, they might be able to express themselves in thoughtful ways and share their world with others. At the same time, they see that their experiences, desires, problems, and hopes and dreams for the future are common to all, though expressed in culturally specific ways. Through creative writing, students can explore their thoughts and feelings and communicate them to others as well. As the creative process unfolds, and as the students make tentative steps at knowing the other, a deeper and more

complete understanding of the immigrant experience, and of the American experience, is achieved.

It is my sincere hope that our *Educating Beyond the Borders of School* student groups will become cultural ambassadors, community leaders, and liaisons for others in the complex process of making the United States their new homes.

—Craig Centrie, Ph.D.
Executive Director/Project Director

Introduction

This past 2016–17 school year, El Museo worked with a group of students at the International Preparatory School (PS 198) on Buffalo’s West Side in an after school program. Funded by a generous grant from the Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, *Educating Beyond the Borders of School* combined hands-on art instruction with activities intended to develop participating students’ interpersonal skills, with the overall aim of promoting understanding and appreciation of other people and cultures. As a bonus, they were also gifted the digital cameras used during the program after its conclusion.

Every Tuesday afternoon, George Campos, Erin Kaminski, Sherry Robbins, William Vogel, and I would gather in Mrs. Kaminski’s art classroom, in the lower level of the former Grover Cleveland High

School, with our group of about thirty students (when they were all there, of course). True to International Prep’s name, these teenagers came from a wide range of ethnic and class backgrounds, many of them immigrants or refugees new to Buffalo.

As fall gave way to winter, we got to work. George and I were the Photo Guys while Sherry reigned as the Goddess of Poetry. Erin kept a masterful hold on the classroom and provided us with critical support and timely suggestions. Will was a tireless administrator and technical coordinator, juggling boxes of cameras, chargers, memory cards, flash drives, even snacks for the kids. We wrote introspective poems, poems about each other, Valentine poems, crazy poems, poems from photos, from postcards, found

poems; we made still life photos, winter break photos, portrait photos, photos from poems, spring break photos, light-painting photos.... We had our students share their work with each other (no small feat), and helped them hone their personal styles.

Suffice to say, the transition from 2016 to 2017 was an ungraceful one, and its sour shadow loomed over us as the year wore on. But we carried on carrying on, and sharing time with this incredibly diverse group of bright, budding adults each Tuesday afternoon was a balm.

When it came time to put together a final exhibition, our students had amassed a body of work so large and varied that it seemed wrong to foist a narrow theme onto it. Instead, we asked them to select work that was meaningful to them, and to consider the photos and poems not as discrete objects but as works that could speak to each other. The result is this

sprawling collection of two hundred photos and poems. Taken together, these two hundred thoughts and expressions and documents tell stories of home, family and the self, dreams of the future, the innocent mundaneness of school life, and the ritual changing of the seasons, all tempered with a familiar dose of teenage fizz.

Like its cousins “where it’s at” and “where you at,” the supposedly superfluous preposition at the end of “where I’m at” is a uniquely American construction that conveys not just a sense of location but also of position, a state of mind, even a mood. In a partial but poignant way, *Where We’re At* attempts to capture a sense of where we’re at, here and now. Amidst the turbulence of our time, the American project continues.

—Bryan Lee
Curator/Teaching Artist

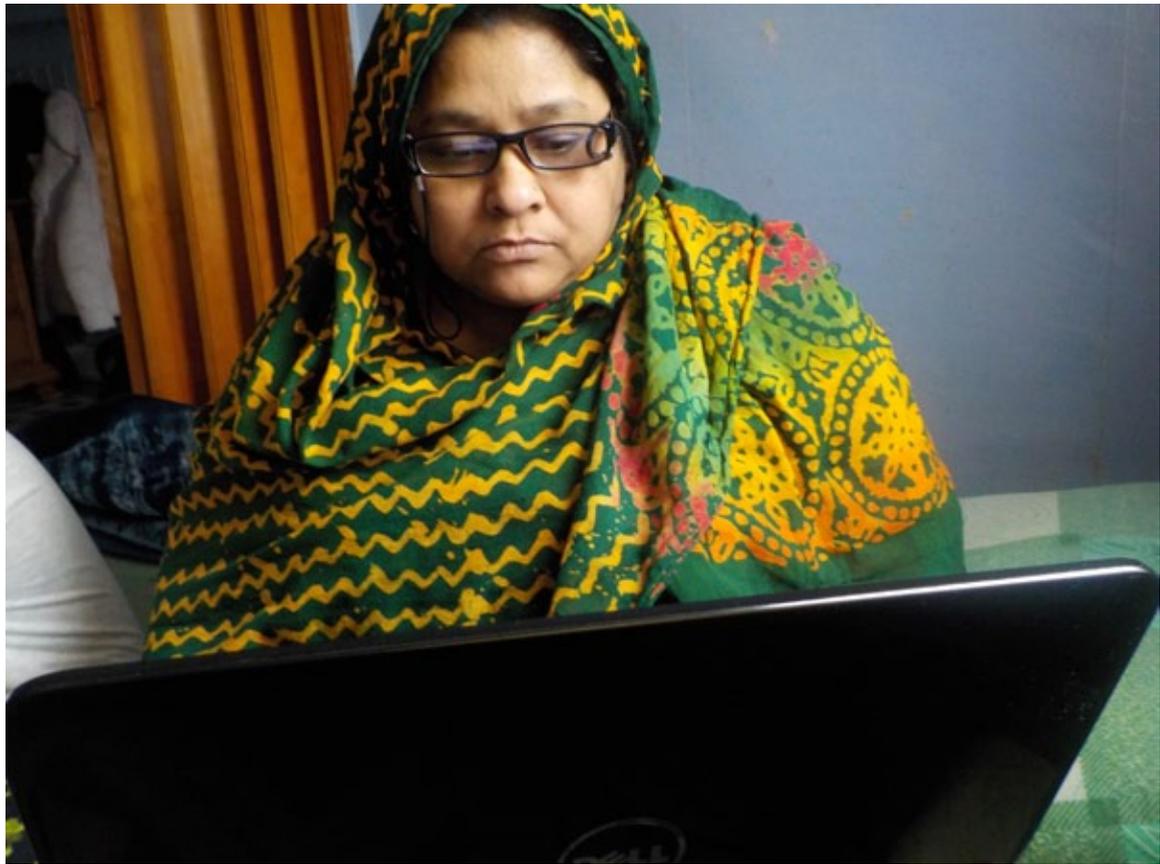
The works

Just Dream

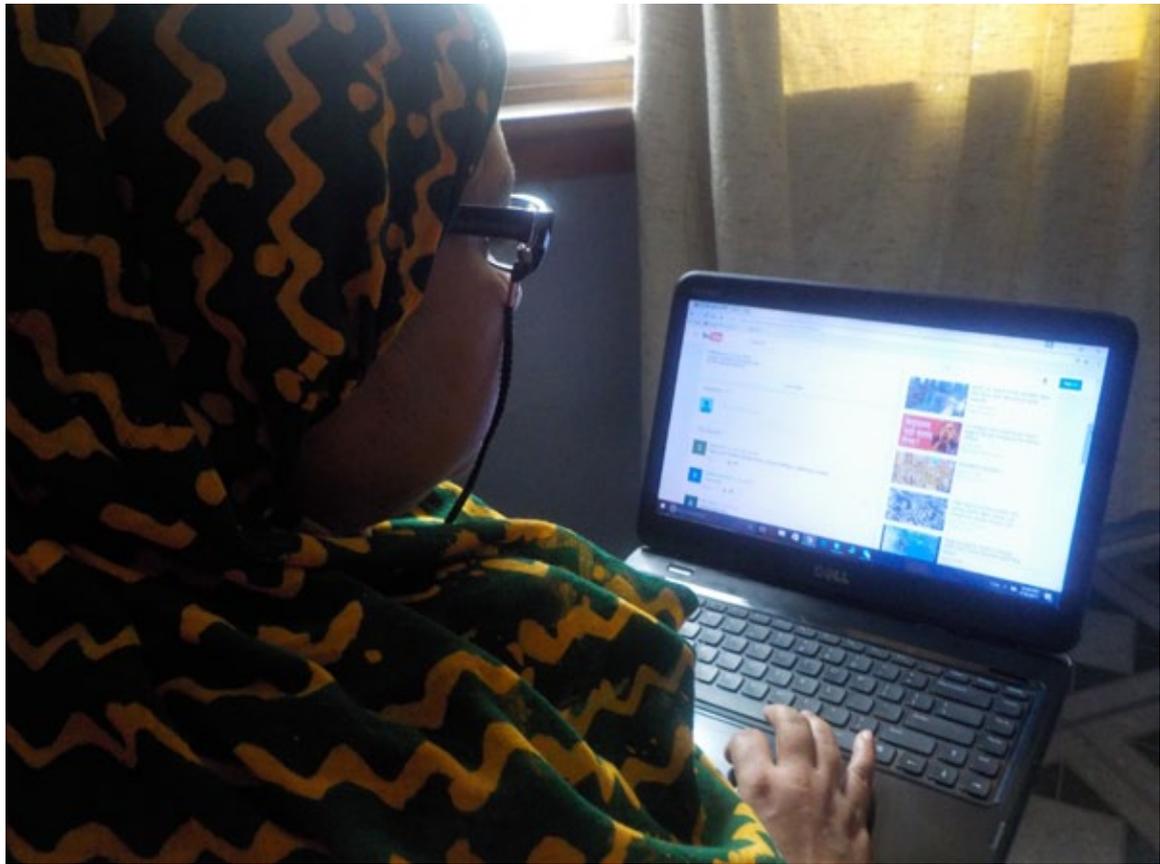
A teenage girl
Who does have some colorful dreams
She thinks about her future goals—
They'd be like pink
She's organizing her dreams.



Rina Akter



Rina Akter



Rina Akter



Rina Akter

My Wishes

A sunny day

A best friend, nature for couple of hours

Where there are no crowds

I want to talk with nature's family

I want to smell them

Want to feel them

A sunny day

When the soil is thirsty

I want to walk with nature

Rina Akter



Rina Akter



Rina Akter

A Unique Eyeball

From the beginning,
The dream of living was twinkle.
Clicking erratic pictures was the dream.
Clicking unlimited snaps!
The beauty on the earth is limitless.
Just look!
Just look out, through your window,
You'll fall in love with the sky,
The trees, the oceans.
Beauty of nature is boundless.

Camera has magic in its lens.
It is magical
My eyes are incapable but my camera!
It shows the beauty extraordinarily.

The beauty of the sunrise steals my soul,
And the sunset snuggles it.

Husna Akther



Husna Akther



Husna Akther



Husna Akther



Husna Akther

Initiating Her Fate (Anita)

Her mind is full of happiness,
Which she finds in love and peace.
The excitement and joy she finds
When meeting new people.
In the woods, she looks for her secret buddy.
Fear never gets control over her bravery.
She would fly to the unicorn island
To meet her imaginary friend.
Yet the imaginary friend is inside the heart of books.
She's shivering to end up in heaven.

Husna Akther



Husna Akther



Husna Akther

Dreamy Butterfly

A sparkle dream; with enormous difficulty,
Not just sitting and waiting for the dream to come true by itself,
But working unbreakably on it,
Wow! Regents, a worst nightmare
Yet some tremendous places that pull me consistently
Do what makes you delighted.
Go wherever you want,
Fly over the sky,
Dive over the ocean,
Run over the bridges,
Give the time some value.



Husna Akther



Husna Akther

Ready to be Heard

A thousand voices ready to be heard.

None are women none are animals no bright colors.

A thousand men praying wearing the clothes that respect
their religion.

No women

No animals

No bright colors

Praying

wearing the clothes that respect their religion.

Kayla Albert

Things

I see mountains, valleys must be below

I don't see the sun,

The ground, just a reflection of the sunrise and a peaceful glow.

Just like the people, they mist away.

Well, what do you know?



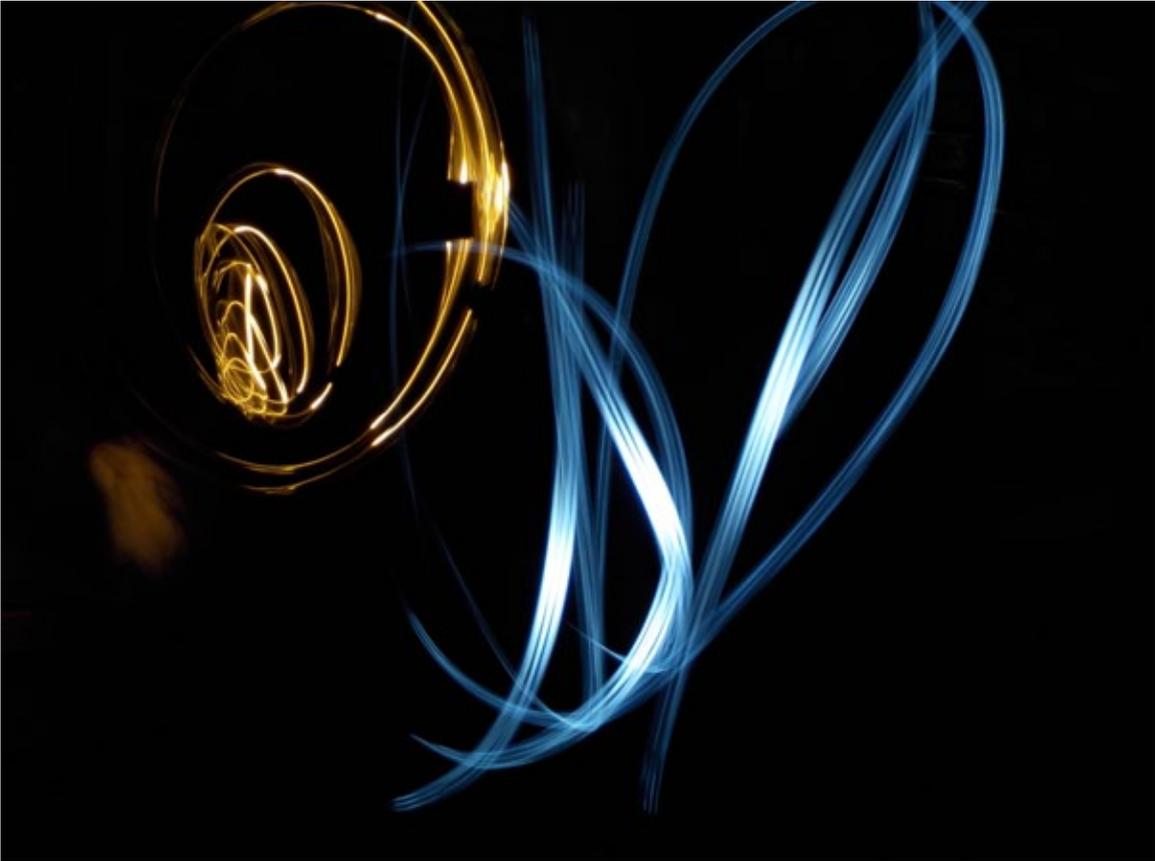
Ayan Omar Ali



Ayan Omar Ali



Ayan Omar Ali



Ayan Omar Ali

Blank

Safe place

Magic land

Dream land

Candy land

In the sky

Friends, fears,

It's what makes us hear

Secrets, tricks,

It's what makes us tick

The sky, the ground, the trees all look blank

Blank

Blank

Blank

Ayan Omar Ali

Out

Pull me out

Pull me out of these burning waters

Pull me out of the same waters that try to drown me

Pull me out

Pull me out of these burning waters

Save my skin

Save my bones

Save me one last time.



Ayan Omar Ali



Isabella Amarante

I will still love you

When the ground has turned to ash and trees fallen like dead bodies,

I will still love you

When the seasons no longer come round with time and our senses become numb,

I will still love you

When our source of energy shuts down and all is forgotten,

I will still love you

Isabella Amarante



Isabella Amarante



Isabella Amarante

Life

Wind touches the water gently
Letting ripples travel
Time walks with roots and watches as rice forms
Horizon hides the sun
As it sets in the sky
Flowers rebirth every year
A new one blooms
Ladies chatter side by side
Getting their work done
In a small little circle
In a big space is when all is peaceful



Isabella Amarante



Isabella Amarante

It's a best friend thing

Even though we don't talk as often as you wish we would ...
I'm here for you in the light times and dark times too
I know I don't text or call unless you do first

But that's just me, your introverted "boring" best friend
I miss you, I do, it's just when distance comes between us
Our lives keep going and sometimes we forget

But don't forget the fun times we had
Or the messes we made
Don't forget the late night talks
Or sitting on the roof
Don't forget the I-love-yous
Or the stupid little fights
Don't forget me and I won't forget you

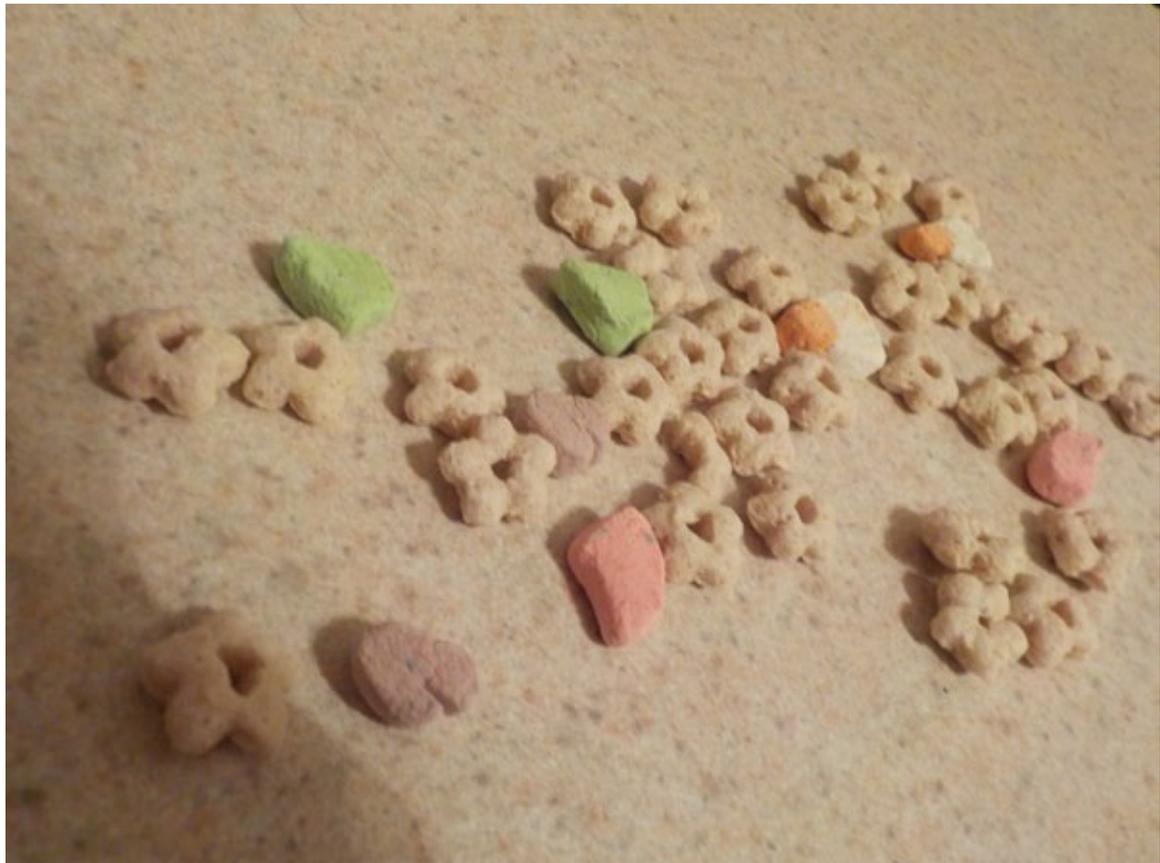
Because I miss you ...
I do

Isabella Amarante

What if?

Valentine's Day
Mushy, gushy, sweet
Couples serenading each other
Proposals all the time
Maybe even a new person to be fond of
"Awhhh how cute!" is what you hear a lot
Balloons, bears, and flowers
This holiday's national symbols
Finding new love celebrating old
This is what makes Valentine's Day great!
But no, not really, it's disgusting
What if somebody has nobody to love?
Or what if that new person goes missing?
What if all that was found is lost?
What if it's all a joke?
What if?

Isabella Amarante



Isabella Amaranante



Keanu Ares

Only I

Only I understood
what no one else ever could,
the dark trees, the pink sky.
Have you ever felt you could fly?
I want to look down from above
and see only the things that I love.
But there is nothing that I compared
to the evening that me and her shared.
Her beauty was beyond belief
as I sat peacefully, full of relief.
The shining dome,
I wish this was home.
But something that only I understood,
what no one else ever could.

Keanu Ares

What Do I Write Here?

Scrambled thoughts
Scary writing
Broken faces, hidden sounds,
Something loud
and getting louder.
I see it but
it walks away.
Can I help it?
What am I saying?
There's nothing there.
There aren't any voices.
What?
Voices?
I don't remember.
What am I speaking of?



Keanu Ares



Anita Baar



Anita Baar



Anita Baar

Nature

It was a peaceful and beautiful day
The clouds were clear
The sea was calm
Flowers bloom and make the tree look pretty
The grass was green
Sailors were out sailing
Fishermen fishing
The shrine gate was open
And people were going in and out
The mountain was smiling from far
Beyond the horizon
And everyone was happy
At last nature was
At peace with the human race

Anita Baar

Careless

You came
You saw it
You touched it
You broke it
And you left
Without caring
Cause it didn't mean
Anything to you
Anyway



Anita Baar



Anita Baar



Anita Baar



Anita Baar

Every Moment Counts

It was a warm winter afternoon and
After tutoring class we went to
The gym to have fun, we were at D'Youville college.
“Destiny,” I said, “let me take a picture of you”
And she made this stupid face just to make me laugh.

You may wonder whose hair is down there
I'm wondering the same
It might be the hair of a friend
But I can assure you that it does not matter as long as I captured
This moment of life

Anita Baar

Where I'm From

I'm from a land

Where kids run around in muddy puddles after the rain

Where everyone is free (whether Christian, Muslim, foreigner or atheist)

Where we spend most of our days on Bernard Beach

Where we dance to all kinds of music

Where we celebrate like there is no tomorrow

Where lions, deer, and foxes roam in the wild freely

Where farming is a necessity

Where it is sunny most of the year

Where grandkids are the only reason grandparents want to live because
they are their only pride

A land full of natural resources

A land where we are cultural and diverse

I am from a land of love, peace and liberty (where its name is derived from)

Where we create our own dance to every song

Where we create our own dance to every song



Anita Baar



Dieumerci Baunda



Dieumerci Baunda



Dieumerci Baunda

A Human

She doesn't care what you think about her
She won't rest until
Her voice is heard.
Always reminding people
That borders don't exist
Maybe it's because she's never seen any
Because her poster says so.
Tirelessly, she lifts up the poster
Protesting the ban
Her poster says:
*"Borders? I have never seen one.
But I have heard that they exist in the
Minds of some people."*
—Thor Heyerdahl

Dieumerci Baunda



Dieumerci Baunda



Dieumerci Baunda

My Wish

I wish I could control time
Because if I could,
I would go to any place
I would go to Asia, Australia, Africa, Brazil,
I would go all over the world in just one second
If I made a mistake, I would undo it
I would save people's lives from accidents
In addition, there would never be war
After all, what I need is education to fulfill my dreams
Because it is never too late to learn.



Dieumerci Baunda



Dieumerci Baunda



Dieumerci Baunda



Mya Bell

Chicago

There are many different things to see in Chicago
But there's one specific thing I would like to talk to you about
The inspirational and meaningful street art and sculptures.
A whole street full of art
Created by many different people.
Just by driving down that street you see all the work people did
It makes you think "What made you create this?"
"What inspired you to want to paint on this wall?"

When you see the street art some are just words.
And when you read the words it makes you want to go do things
One person painted "CREATE A FRESH PATH"
Another one says "GO FOR IT"

Mya Bell



Mya Bell



Mya Bell

A day in fall

A beautiful day in fall

A family came together to celebrate

To celebrate what?

We don't know

They look happy to be together

They seem to be in a park

All of them are doing something with their hands but what?

Could they be pointing at the camera?

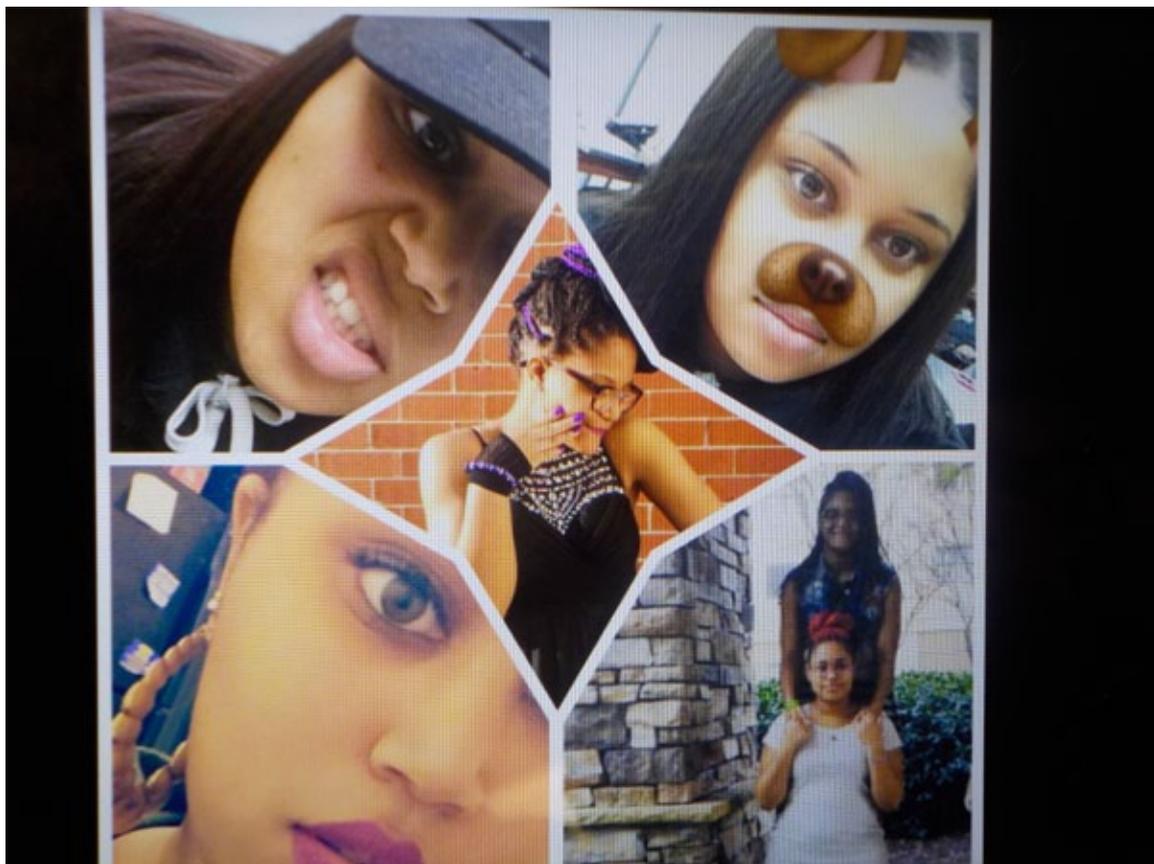
Putting two fingers together?

About to snap their fingers and were caught in the moment?

Who knows?



Mya Bell



Mya Bell

Desire'

My sister,

We have the same skin color

Even though people say I look more like mom then she does, everyone calls her desi.

She is a second mom to me.

She's caring, funny, loving and many more things.

Even though she is scared of heights I consider her to be very brave.

She inspires me to follow my dreams.

Unlike me she is very outgoing and is not afraid to speak her mind to anyone.

When she's mad you should leave her alone.

I can talk to her about anything and I love her very much with all my heart.

Mya Bell

Best friend

Don't forget

Don't forget about me, I miss you more than you will ever know

Don't forget how much I love you

Don't forget all the fun we have had, even though we live so far apart

Don't forget all the kisses we have shared

Don't forget about me!!!



Mya Bell



Anjali Bista

Family Poem

He is the moon and sun
in my eyes
always wonder who am I
Sometimes I am honey
Sometimes I'm the bee

You can call him by various names
but for me he stays the same
No wonder he is crying
within himself
Look at me, Baby, we can laugh

Broke the chain
that made you cry
Come along with the pride
I still don't know
why this is hard. At least,
Baby, give it a try.
Always wonder who am I.

Anjali Bista

Don't Judge Me!

You think I'm bossy
but I'm not
It's just the words
that come out
but
if you step in my shoes
and go as far as I have
I would ask
How am I?
Don't Judge Me
in the first second.
Judge me with feeling.
Easy to judge people.
Hard to understand.
I'm not bossy.
It's just words, just
being sarcastic.

Anjali Bista



Anjali Bista



Gabriel Cohen

Steps

With the ponderous steps in which I walk
I remain but still,
Swayed by the shakes,
Yet stood by the still.
The still words that hold my resolve.
I remain but unsteady
As these gross pains support the odd cohesion,
The amalgamation of what is not,
And of what I wish.

Gabriel Cohen

Free flow

When we go and feel each other in the most
spiritual sense

I can tell you that I can feel you

You

I can sense the hesitation the joy the fervor
the tremors the shakes

I can sense the caredness and I sense
the hatred

I sense the radness

I can tell you that when I say the words
I feel

They just fall out of my mouth

Projectile emotions exploding

Sickeningly sweet sounds crying

If I could refine these thoughts

These free formed words

Then I feel that the bond they could make
is strong enough for us all

For us all to ignore the pain I can bring

For us to forget any regret and to feel the
perfect

Feel the perfect forms the perfect feelings
the perfect sounds and the perfect
perfect

The emotions that I feel singe my insides
slowly cook me until I am overdone

These things make me tremor and
make me sweat and make me hurt

But those feelings

They can soothe any burn they can treat
any cut they can

They can make me realize how much I can't
do anything regarding this

They can make me realize how tired and
how hurt and how tired I am

I just wish



Gabriel Cohen



Gabriel Cohen

Lola

One day
I asked her,
So Marcos, how was it all.
The time, the place the people.
She said it was all fine
The fish was cheap

Gabriel Cohen

I Would

If you gave me one night of peace
I would show you tranquility by calming your world
I would describe to you my love through tear-jerking ballads
I would warm up the night with the thumping in my heart
I would allude to the need of you by showing you my flaws
I would give you a reason to leave by just being me
I would give you someone to love by not being enough
I would show you my heart and I don't know if it would repulse you
I would try my hardest knowing I'm not worth it
I would turn you away by showing you how much I need you
I would know that you're unattainable
I should have always known it



Gabriel Cohen



Gabriel Cohen



Gabriel Cohen



Gabriel Cohen

Special

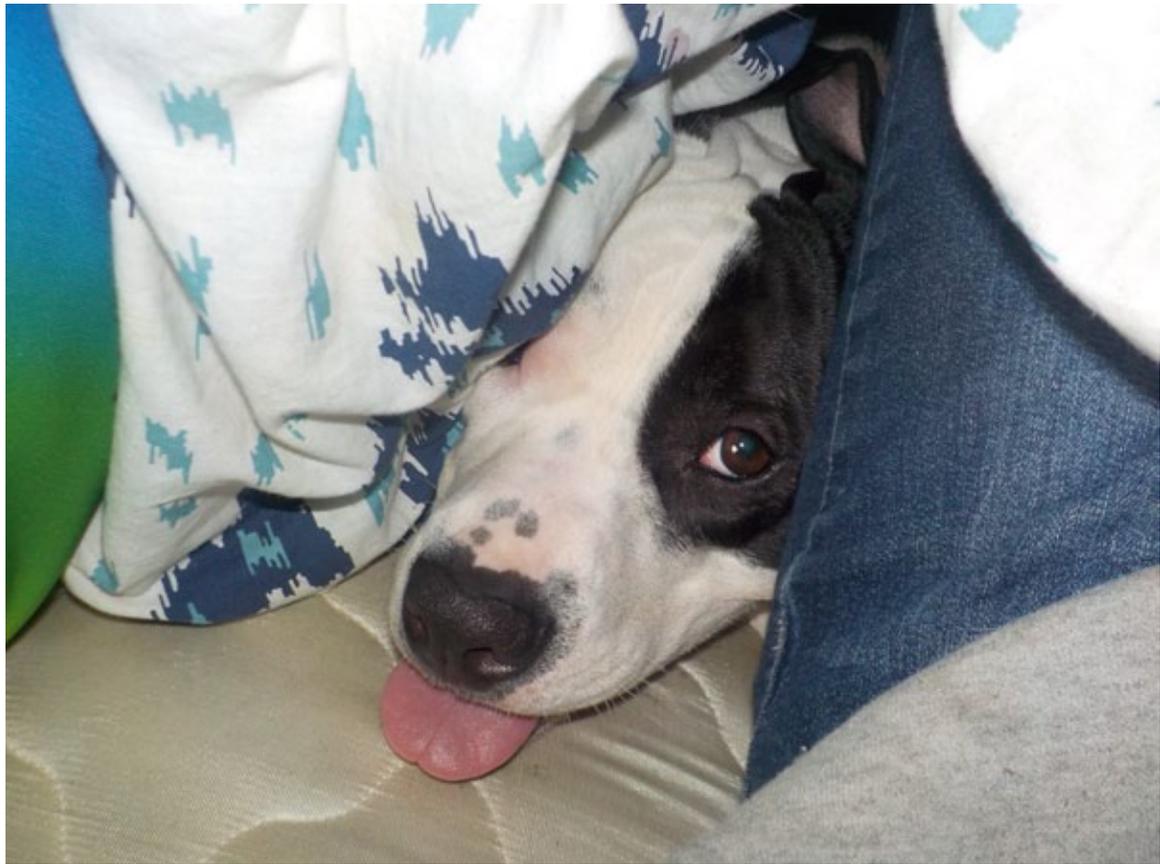
Shout out to the self-destruction within,
for without I can't rebuild.
Shout out to the warmth, for making me
realize the cold.
Shout out to the people I hurt, the ones
who have and have yet to.
Shout out to my faith for not existing.
Shout out to the trash I call my paintings.
Shout out to the love I give.
Shout out to the anger, the hate and its
permanent impermanence.
Shout out to the shouts.
Shout out to the voices.
Shout out to my friends.
Shout out to the disappointed.
Shout out to the tears.
Shout out to the pity.
Shout out to the wanting, the needing to
feel bad,
The need that only exists because of you!

Your need to feel the breath of relief when
you should have drowned,
The parachute that should have ripped,
The ambulance that should have been
delayed,
Shout out to the one who loves me,
The one who sees the ingrown child who
doesn't know how to deal with things
that haven't been fed to him.
Shout out to "Her,"
That her.
Whatever your "Her" may be.
Your her.
They don't have to be her, him, them, or it.
Your "Her" is special
Shout out to the special.

Gabriel Cohen



Gabriel Cohen



Toriana Cornwell



Toriana Cornwell

No Name

Outside there are a lot of things to explore
Lots of places to see
Lots of places to be
Adventure is my high

You can get experience from anything you do
And I make a story out of everything I see
Whether its reality or not
Creating “Lone Wolf” stories out of a day in breeze

I can't say that I won't smile at something
As simple as these photos,
But if you look closer
You can make things

Creative stories out of nothing at all
But that's the good part isn't it?
Finding something no one but you find beautiful
Still more things that will emit

Toriana Cornwell

Classroom

Lots of things happen in this place
Lots of different people here

Quinton
The class clown
Not one to care
Funny and awesome
Has a man crush on Steph Curry
Competitive

Hizam, the funny one,
The let's-tick-the-teacher-off one,
One who loves basketball
And has a YouTube channel

Jaylynn, Smart but can't put that into
sentences
Funny and goofy
And tough and short
And loyal to friends

Toriana Cornwell

Cabrina
The not-so-smart girl
Down for anything
Always has food
Can't get enough of her

These are the people in my class
You should meet them
But I'm sure you won't
They make me laugh all the time

Which is why our class is always in trouble



Toriana Cornwell



Toriana Cornwell



Toriana Cornwell



Toriana Cornwell

Gabriella

She's a friend of mine,
I love her like a sister
She's funny and pretty
I wish I could smile as much as her

Has a funny laugh
That'll make you laugh
Genuine and smart
Smarter than me

Has a lot going for her
There's nothing that can change that
Can sing,
But not dance,

Comedical,
But not one for anyone
I have nothing else
So I'll end it here

Toriana Cornwell

My Future

I can't choose between what I want,
or need
I have no idea if want to stay or
Leave

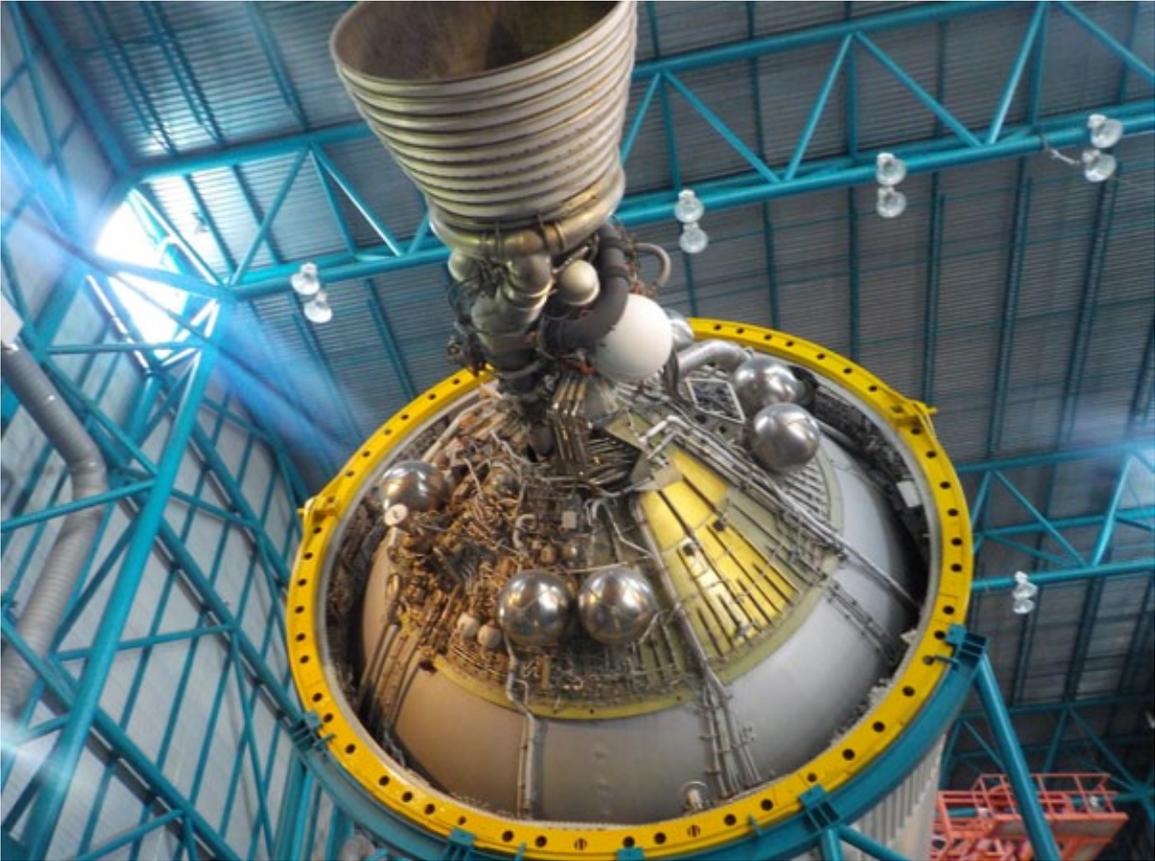
My life isn't messed up,
Just confusing
I feel like I know what will happen

I should know what to expect from life,
I'm scared that the worst might happen
I'm fed up with lies
It's worse than I imagined

I guess I'll cross that bridge when I
come to it
Though it's hard,
I'm trying not to quit

I'll stay true to myself,
And be okay with my problems
Though they intrude
I run through multiple columns

Toriana Cornwell



Toriana Cornwell



Toriana Cornwell

Why am I Lost?

“Don’t be afraid to go out on a limb; that’s where the fruit is!”

—Jackson Browne

Things seem so different where I
usually be.

Why am I lost?

Can you tell me?

Did I go somewhere I don’t
remember?

I ask the same question—
why am I lost?

Have no family here

Things don’t feel the same

No houses here or there
or near or far

I need help.

Why am I lost?

Jashawna Davis

Complications

Lust

Simple, yet not

Love

Simple, yet not

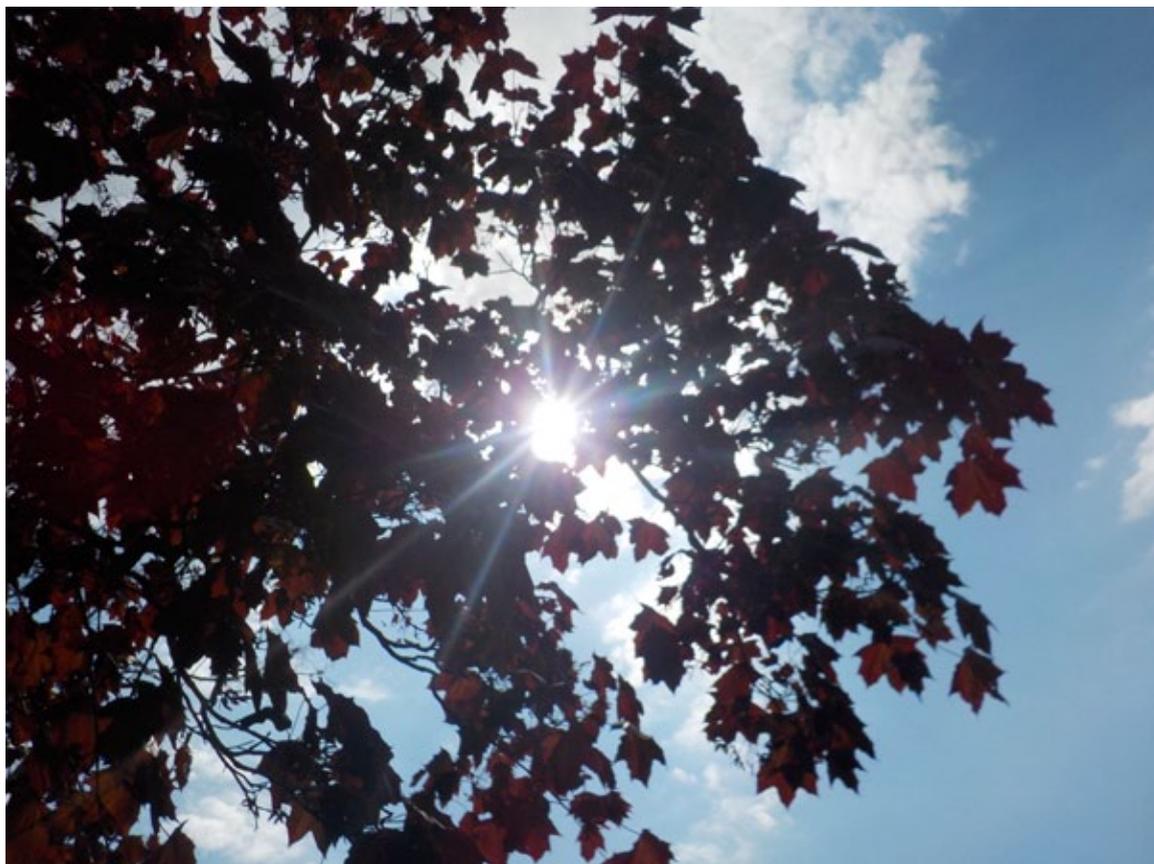
Life

Simple, yet not

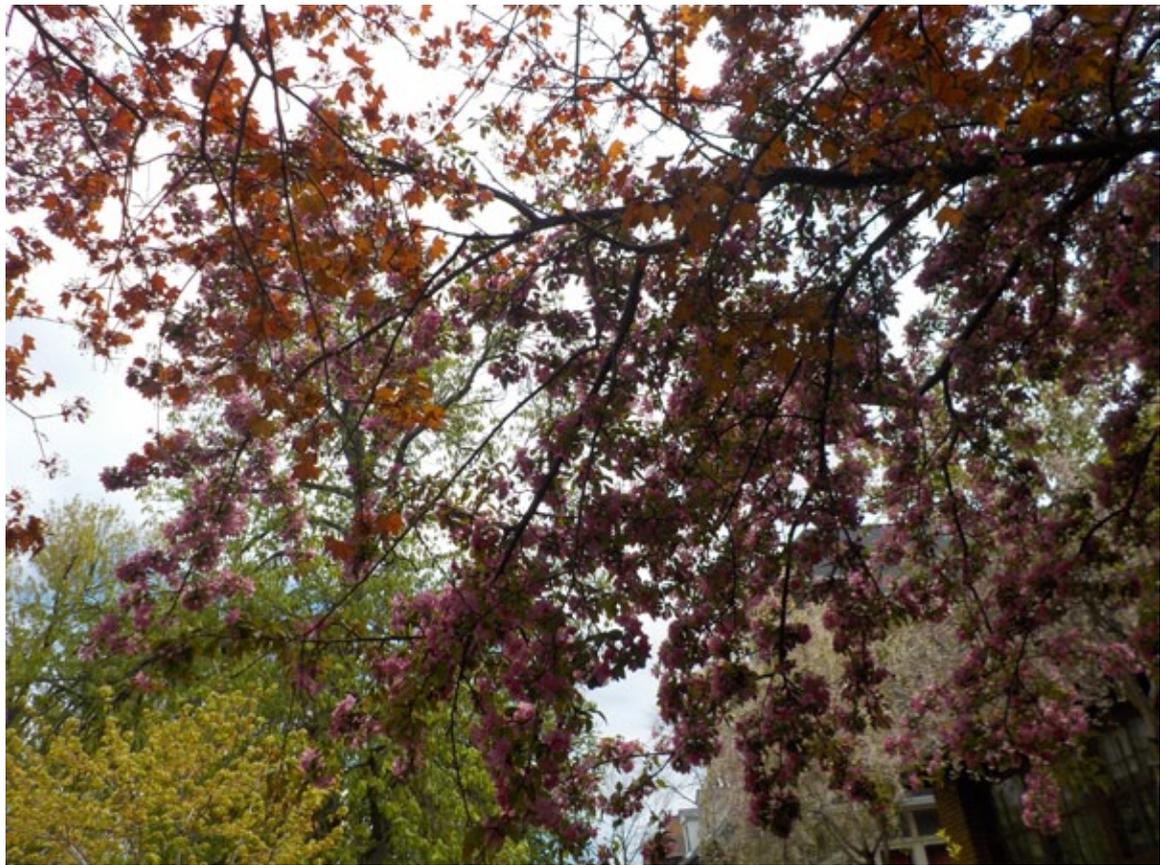
But what can you do?



Juan Díaz



Juan Díaz



Juan Díaz



Juan Díaz

The Lovers and the Devil

Toxic Love

That's the first thought

Many meanings lie within the two

Neither positive nor negative

Simply there for your benefit

Major changes in love and friendships

Secret love affairs

Be cautious

Juan Díaz

Spiral

The circle of life
In spirituality
It's remarkable

122

Juan Díaz



Juan Díaz



Juan Díaz

Memories

A mental movie
Played only within your brain
The joy they retain

Juan Díaz

My Name is Fahmida

I'm a little girl from
Rahman's family
who grew up very freely.
At the age of 16, blue sky fell upon me.
Didn't know where life was taking me.
Losing my father was a real
life attack to me.
That very moment Mama
held me and showed me
the way Allah was
leading me!



Fahmida Rahman Eida



Fahmida Rahman Eida



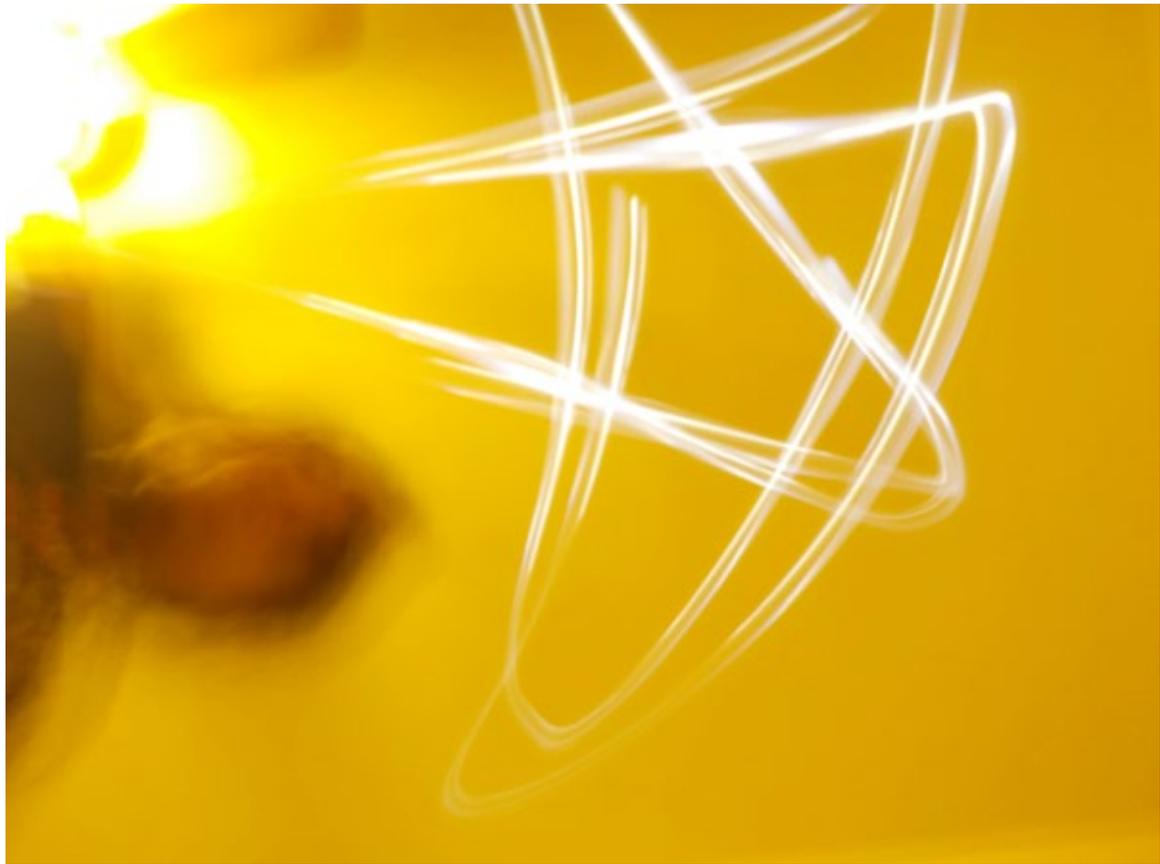
Naw Gay



Naw Gay



Naw Gay



Naw Gay

Friendship is Love

Love to me is our friendship
Friendship doesn't have a limit when you are
Loving, caring, and helping them through difficulty.
Love doesn't matter what a person look like
It only matters when a person knows that
They are going to be there for another person when they are in need
That's what love is to me
ME, YOU, and OUR FRIENDSHIP
That IS LOVE.

Naw Gay



Naw Gay



Naw Gay

My Grandma

My grandma, my only grandma
Never seen my grandpa
But my grandma was never sad
As if you can see a big smile on her face every time you see her
Sometime she cries out a person's name
But I never found out who he was
Probably my grandpa I guessed
My grandma always has a curious eye
Always wonders who I am,
As the youngest of eight children of my parents,
Probably time and age is the reason
My grandma always wonders who I am
I miss my grandma,
But her image fades as time flies.

Naw Gay



Bryce Hill



Bryce Hill



Bryce Hill



Bryce Hill



Bryce Hill

Open Heart

A wide variety of friends
Can lead to nothing being able to shake you
The support of your friends
Will make you able to stand strong

Friends can also motivate you to
Live healthy by enjoying
A nice long run

Sometimes life can
Throw things at you
That makes it hard
To not kick back
Maybe with a big mac

Bryce Hill



Michael Houser



Michael Houser



Michael Houser



Michael Houser



Michael Houser



Michael Houser

I am Syeda

I came from Bangladesh

I like to eat chocolate

I have so many relatives and friends

I like traveling to new places

I am laughing all the time

I like to eat fast food

I like to celebrate

Eid and also ...

Syeda Khatun



Javon Linwood



Javon Linwood



Javon Linwood



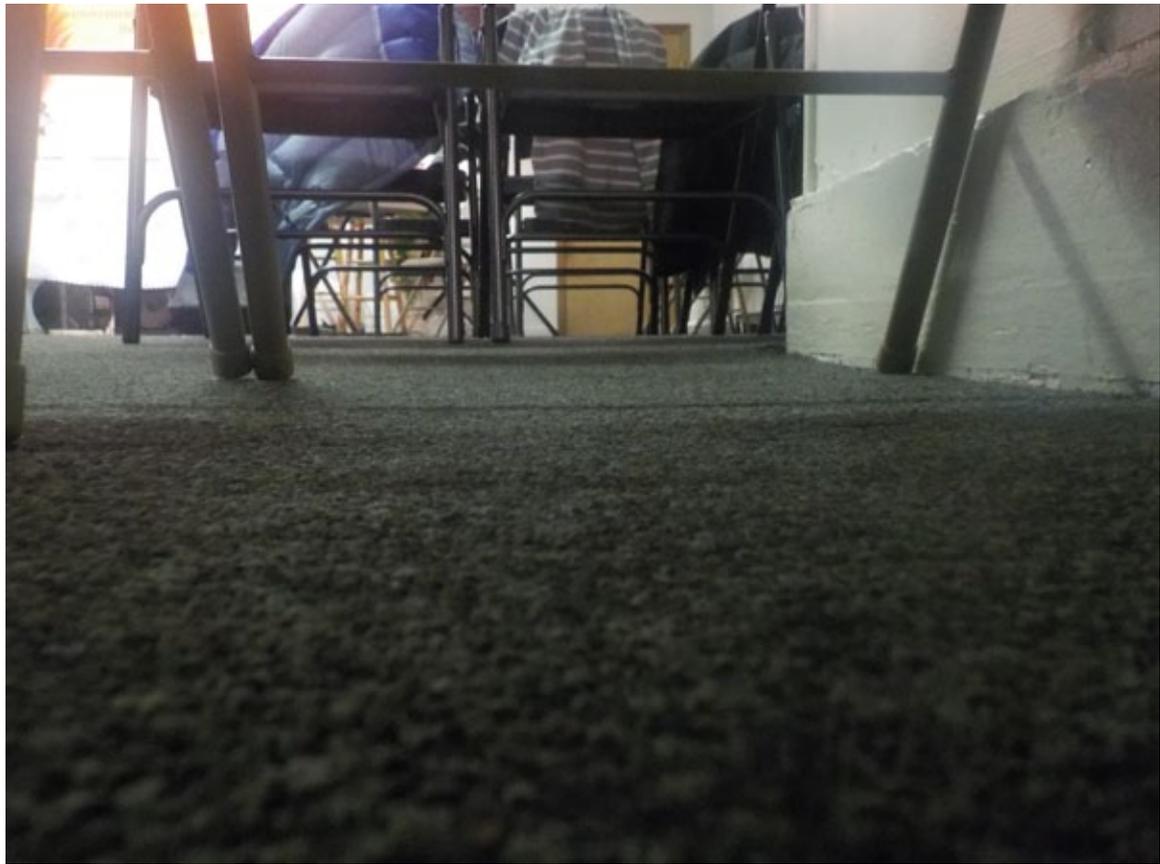
Javon Linwood

Shout Out

Shout out to the chicken
that was cleaned and seasoned
in the sink. Shout out to the steak
and burgers, and you know
I don't like them pink. To my future
kids. Birds, I eat those, I'm not
a vegan. Too much sauce.
Straight lines curved sauce
clocks cause your time is running.
Shout out to these hands. Crayons
pans colors food food food food
I love food. My Mom she make it.
Chicken.



James Love



James Love

Even Though

Even though I have a good day
people always ask me why I look
mad or what's wrong I say nothing
with a straight face and I keep
moving I don't feel a lot of pain I don't
feel empty but I don't feel full
I'm not tired but I'm not in the mood either
But sometimes I want to be alone
by myself why won't you leave me alone
Why can't I just be by myself why do you have
to know me so much why do you continue
to seek for the true me because all you're
looking for is to hurt yourself.

James Love

Travel World

I am from a travel world.
My world travels around many places.
My world starts with a place called Thailand,
Then it travels to another side of the
World which is the United States.

In Thailand, they eat rice whereas in U.S. they eat pizza.
There are differences between two countries
However, both countries share this one thing in common,
The sense of deliciousness of food.

The deliciousness of Thai food brings
Many people back even when they have moved
Out of the country. That's how my world will
Travel back to Thailand one day.
Small things like delicious food can bring a
Person back to that certain place.

Lu Meh



Lu Meh



Lu Meh



Klihtoo Paw



Klihtoo Paw

What Makes You Yourself

I am from a world
people barely visit. It is a temporary place
for everyone. They come and go. However,
I call this a home because it is where my
life begins and will end.

This place is named Wild Town due to the fact
that it is only a visit place for people.

The smell of Hawaiian breezes attracts everyone.

The seafood that was reserved for guests was
the main attraction. The beauty
and the personality of people there
make others want to leave behind everything,
but for them it was impossible.

Klihtoo Paw

The Meaning of Life

Enter with love, peace, joy, and happiness or don't enter at all.

Water in a water bottle can prevent dehydration.

The snakes hiss and freak everyone out.

The breezes in Hawaii and Bora Bora are relaxing.

Time disappears into reality, which causes everything to change.

God is my hero and my savior. Everything is possible through God.

You can be a hero and make a change for those who suffer.

We are the world, we are the children ...

so, let's not wish for the superpower of invisibility

and hide from all the whining, crying, and shouting.

Instead, let's make a change.



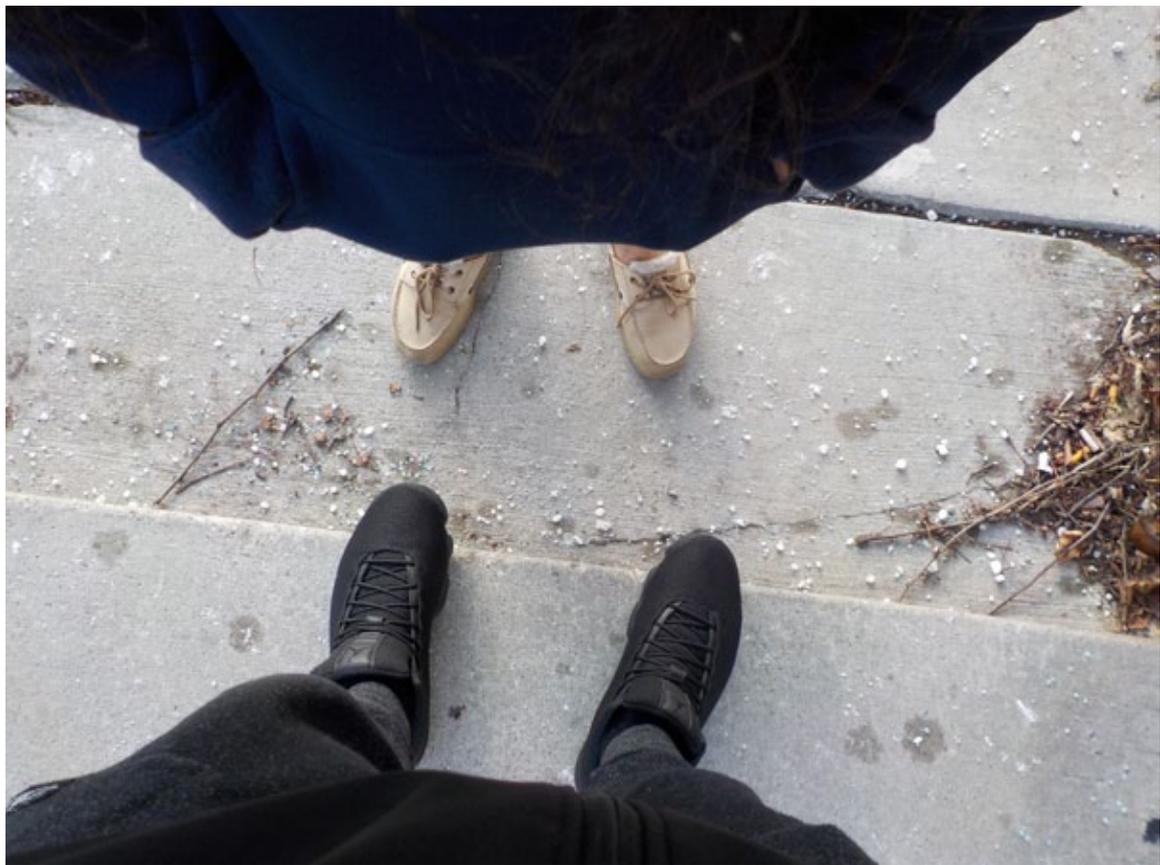
Rey Ramos



Rey Ramos



Rey Ramos



Rey Ramos

Gift

A gift,
something that brings you joy
something that makes you feel loved or special,
Yes, a gift,
the feel of warmth and sensation,
the feel of your lips rubbing against mine slows
down time, the one thing that's everyone's killer.
A killer
SCARY, right?

Rey Ramos

I am more

I am more than just a joke or
the thought of laughter.

I am more than the shadow cast
behind you for eternity.

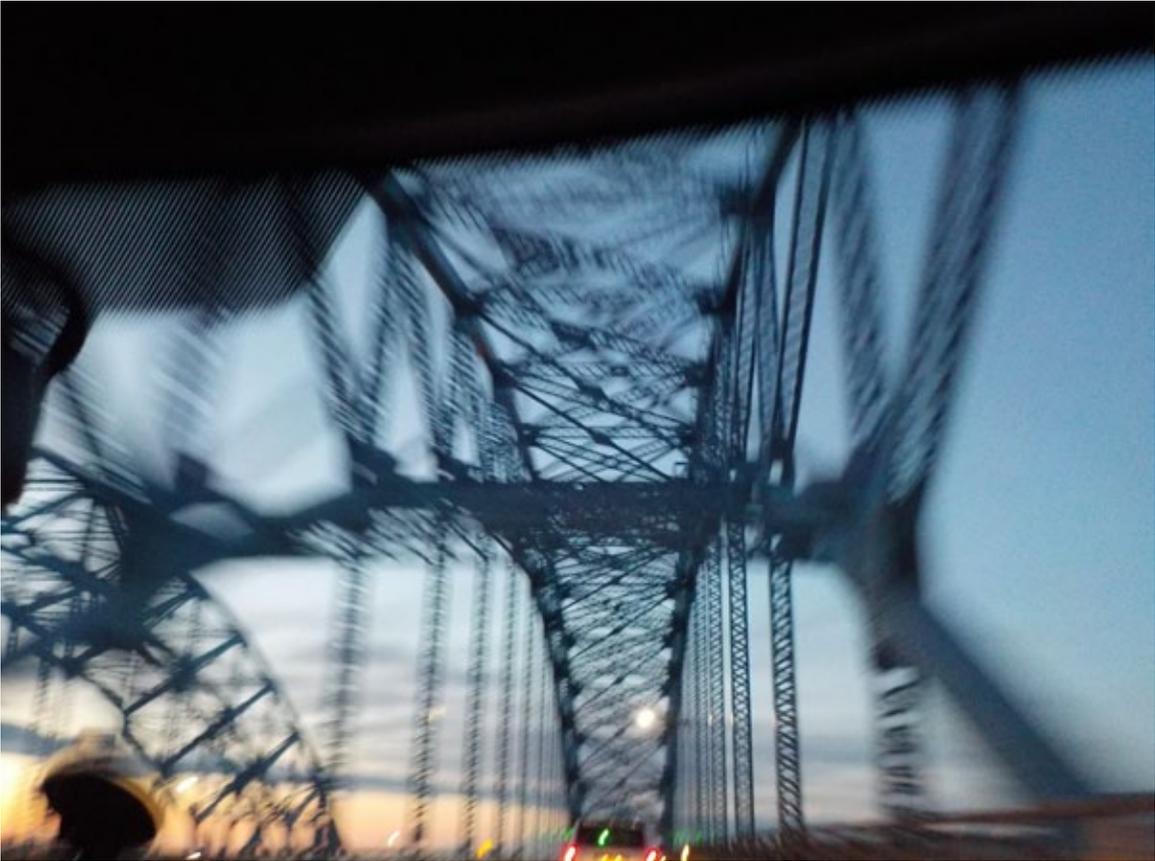
I'm more than a deep dark
dry desert destined to die.

I'm more than just the falling leaves
in the morning winter.

I am more than an object
that you can use when you feel
... low.



Rey Ramos



Astrid Nicole Lopez Ribot

I am from

I am from an island.

I am from a place

In which the coquis

Sound every night.

I am from my land.

I am from the beautiful

Beaches on which we walk.

I am from my arroz con gandules

Y pasteles food.

I am from an island on which

We have two Christmases

I am from my home.

Astrid Nicole Lopez Ribot

Everything

White snow falling from
The empty trees.
White snow laying on the roof.
Green leaves flying in the sky,
Useless things laying on the ground.

Everything has a meaning
Even our heart that is beating.

Just anything means everything to me.



Astrid Nicole Lopez Ribot



Astrid Nicole Lopez Ribot



Astrid Nicole Lopez Ribot



Astrid Nicole Lopez Ribot

My sisters

Both of them are incredible.
Pretty smiles everywhere, but it is that
What they really feel?
If they fight, I would be their referee.
They always get angry when
They lose a game.
If they bite I bite them back.
Both of them always being
Friendly is what I see
Every day. No matter what
We go through we still
Love each other.

Astrid Nicole Lopez Ribot



Astrid Nicole Lopez Ribot



Diandra Lee Lopez Ribot



Diandra Lee Lopez Ribot



Diandra Lee Lopez Ribot

Black Hole

Something in me
Tells me to leave
Pride to one side
And tell you how
Much I miss you
But so that once I
Leave pride to one side
And I hurt

You used me, then you drop me,
You trampled on me,
And left
Without caring about my feelings,
No matter how important you were to me
No matter that I call you sister
You just used me
Now you ask for forgiveness
And you will never have a friend
Like me, and that it was all a
Misunderstanding

But the damage is already done

I'm a living black hole,
A black hole, it's my heart,
My eyes are deep and mysterious
Like a black hole,
You smile at me and
I fall into the abyss,
When I hear your voice
All darkness disappears
And you turn from a black hole
To be my moon

Diandra Lee Lopez Ribot



Diandra Lee Lopez Ribot



Diandra Lee Lopez Ribot



Maria Rivera



Maria Rivera

I am a Warrior

I am strong.

I am a warrior.

I go day by day

hunting, trying to get my prized

possession.

The lion's mane is my prized possession.

And now I realize that a traveler without
observation is a bird without wings.

Maria Rivera

Doesn't Matter Where

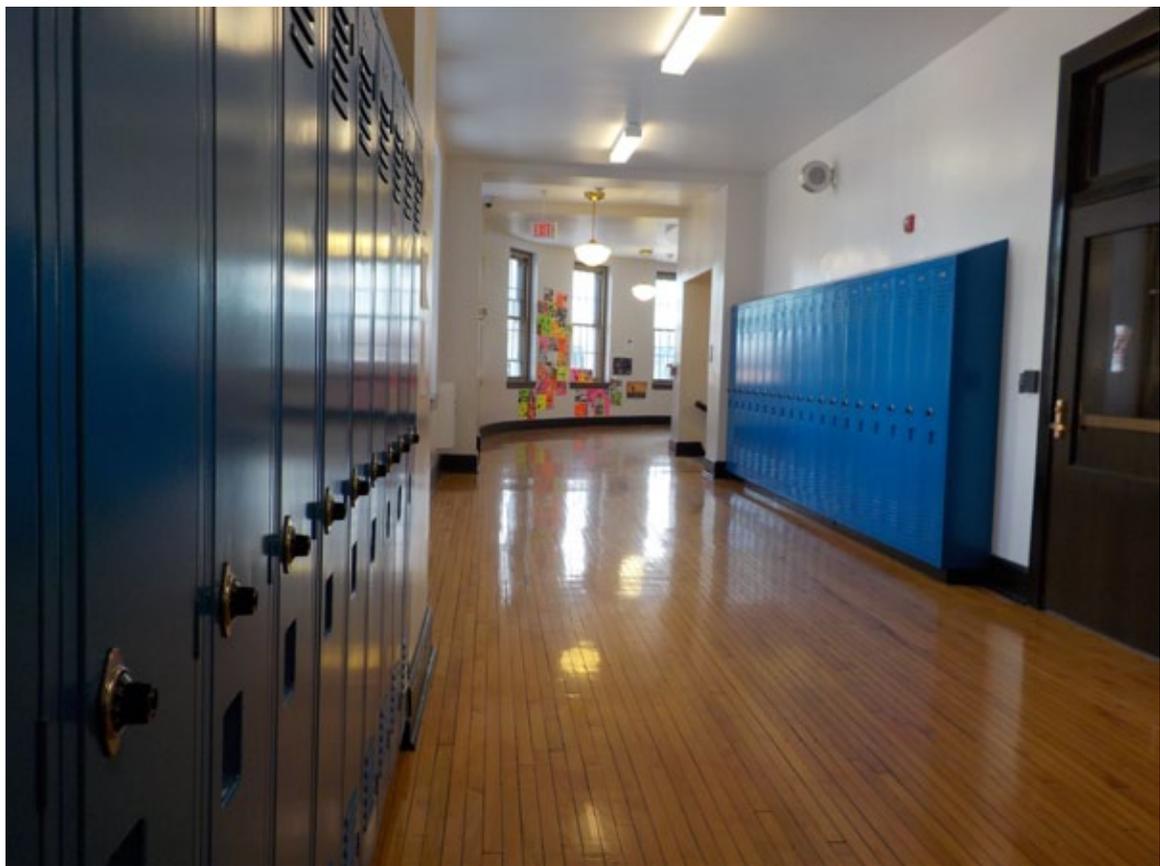
Small town
or Big City

It doesn't matter where you are—
gun violence, rape, and robbery—
this is the world I live in,
where racism isn't getting better,
but worse.

People die, mothers cry.
What has this world become?

I pray, I pray,
every night I pray,
wishing everything could be okay.

Maria Rivera



Aye San



Aye San

At the Same Time

I am from a beautiful place called
Malaysia. The smell of that place
is stinky with dirty water and
garbage all over the street.

The food is spicy like a
fire, but delicious at the same time.

The music makes everyone dance and fall
in love.

Aye San



Jaylynn Santiago



Jaylynn Santiago



Destiny Stewart

Best Friends

The one on the left starts with N

On the right S

I've known them since 9th

S played volleyball

I've seen a lot of the games

N plays it in gym with me

I miss having classes with S

Destiny Stewart



Destiny Stewart



Destiny Stewart



Destiny Stewart



Destiny Stewart

Family

This is my family

S, A, and me

A is the youngest

S is the middle child

I am the oldest

A's sleepy because he's only been up a little



Nashaly Velez Vale



Nashaly Velez Vale

What I See

I see

a little boy riding a buffalo

a beautiful sunny day

a few big brown mountains

where they live

a small long river

I don't see anger or the

sun

Blue. Green. White.

Nashaly Velez Vale

Can You Tell?

Who caused that smile?

Who is making her happy?

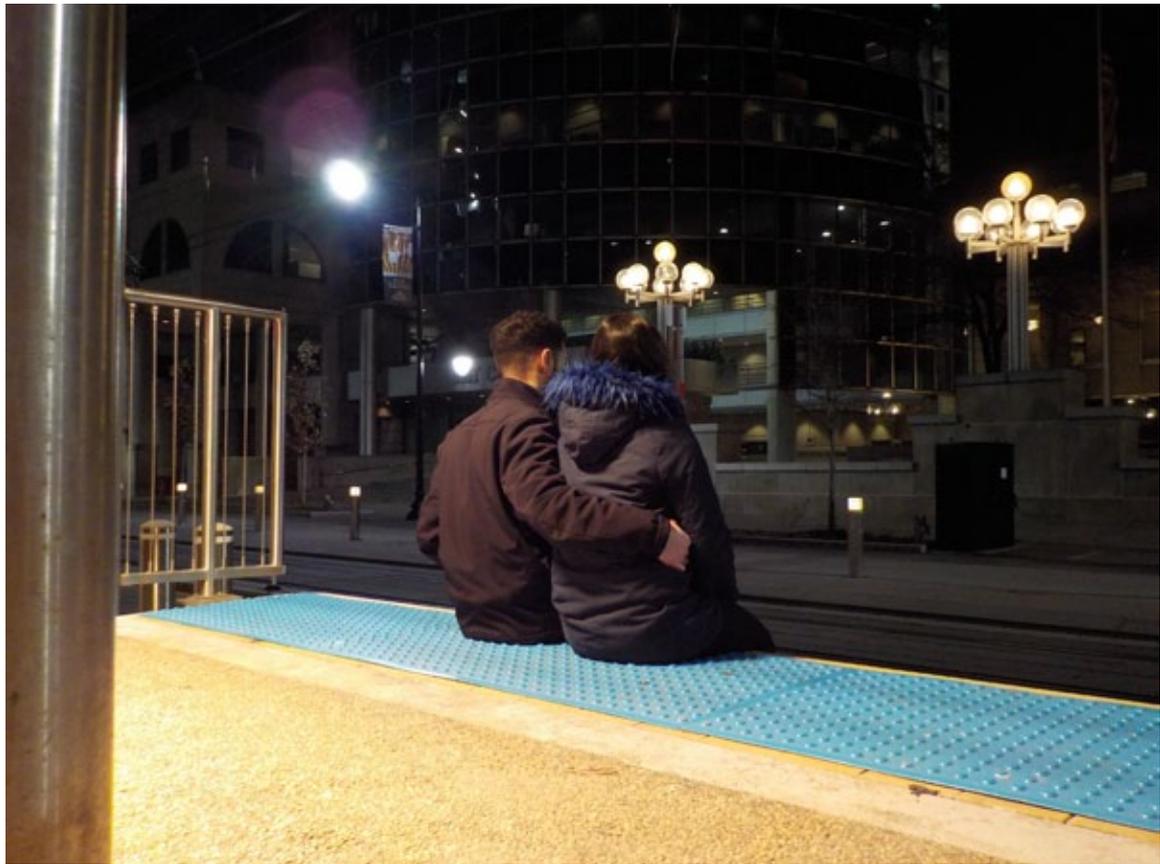
Who dared to be with her?

Is it the gentleman in the back?

Is our train going into the station or pulling away?

Will it be forever or for a second?

Just make her happy and that's it.



Nashaly Velez Vale



Nashaly Velez Vale



Nashaly Velez Vale

What I See

I see windows, balcony edges, but no life.
I see bricks, but no nature, no traffic. Not
much to be seen but a distorted reflection
off another building. I see no sidewalks,
just a lonely Aladdin sign on a lonely
casino.

No Case

I'm from a dangerous place called Buffalo
Where every human life comes and goes.
Some streets quiet but most are loud.
#BlackLivesMatter, Police send gunshots in crowds.
#AllLivesMatter, to me anyway.
Everybody is equal, I'm not about to play.
I'm from a place where we take the Regents exam.
And a place where on Thanksgiving the second plate is ham.
Never trust a soul, you will be with no peanut butter, but jam.
I'm from a place where I like to be funny.
It's about to be winter so it's never about to be sunny.
Wear warm clothes but my nose still running.
Like I said, Buffalo is a dangerous place
(gunshot) dead body NO CASE!!

Antone Weeden

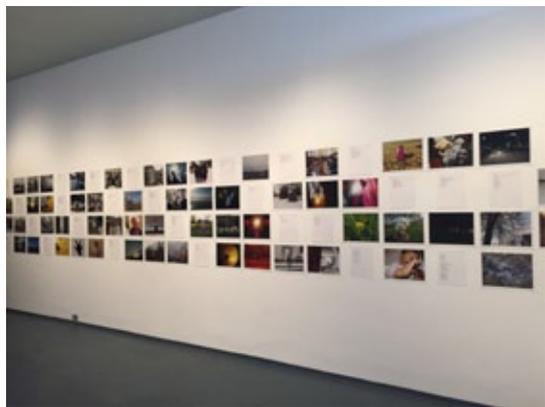
The exhibition

June 3–30, 2017

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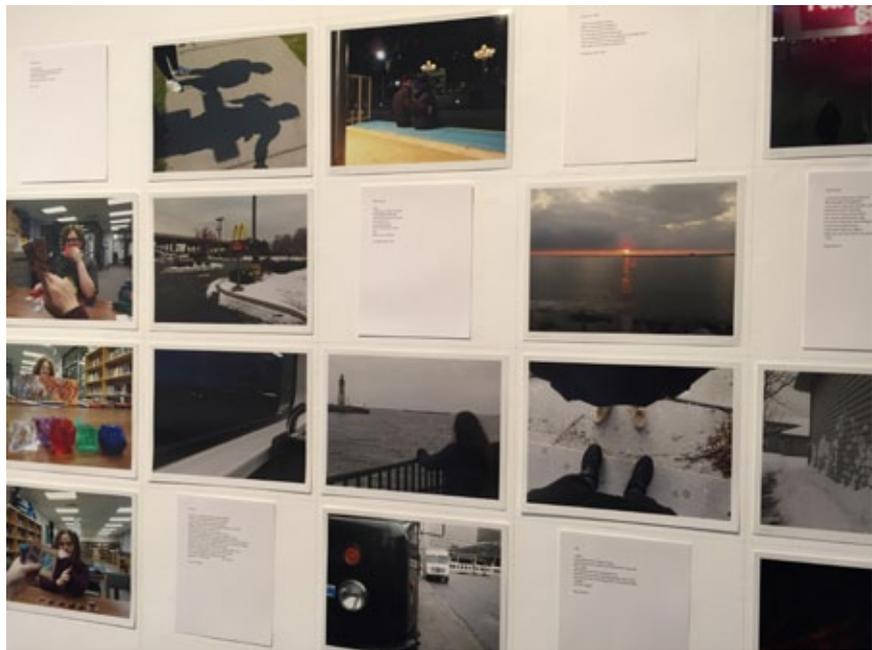


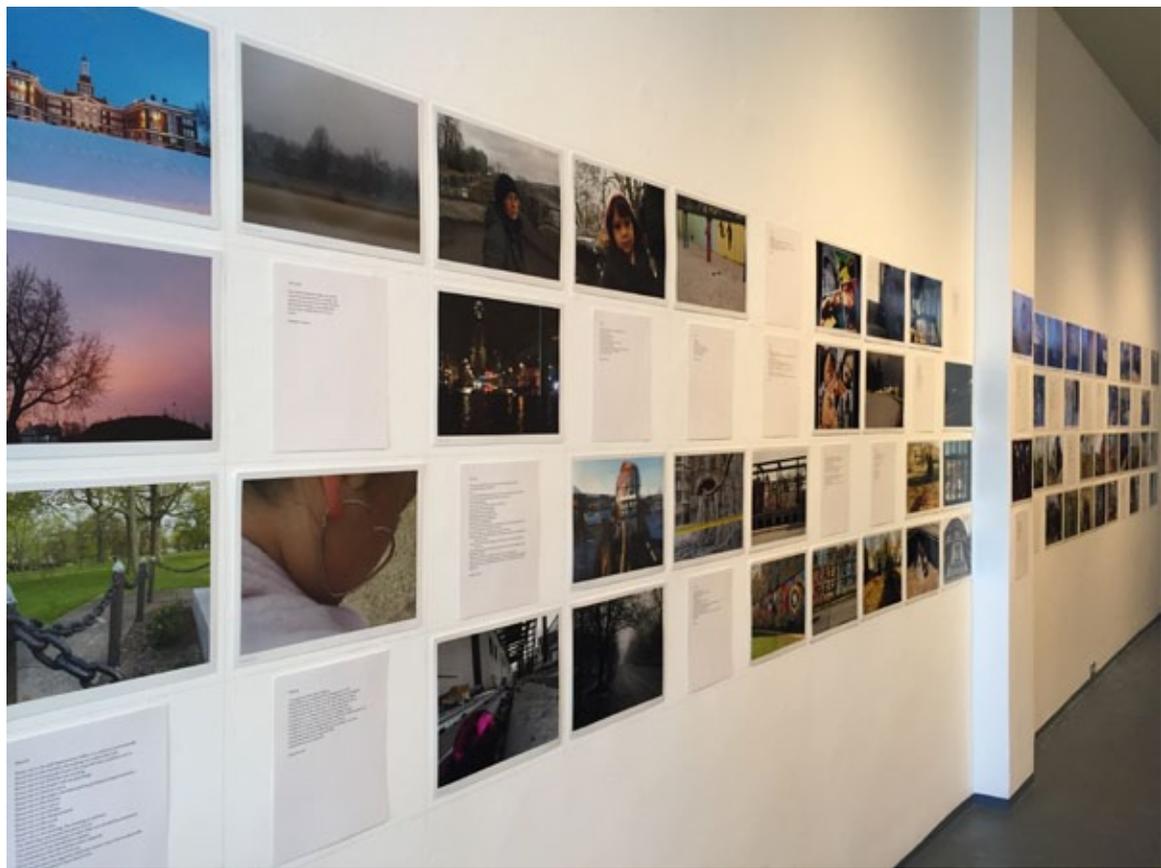
Photos by Bryan Lee













Afterword(s)

This book represents the culmination of a year-long after-school project at International Prep at Grover. Our goal was to celebrate the great range of cultures in the student population through photography and poetry, and help create cultural ambassadors through the arts. My focus was on creative writing, and each week the students demonstrated that they clearly see and hear the world around them, and can articulate its differences and common bonds. I am very proud to have been a part of the team of teachers and artists involved with these talented students.

—Sherry Robbins
Teaching Artist

It was a pleasure collaborating with over two dozen young men and women from everywhere, with a passion to communicate, both through words and images, their identities and their backgrounds and their interests. It provided confirmation over and over again of our national motto, *E Pluribus Unum*—out of many, one.

I also greatly enjoyed working with the team assembled by Craig Centrie at El Museo: Erin Kaminski, Sherry Robbins, Will Vogel, and Bryan Lee.

—George Campos
Teaching Artist

Our project here began with a simple notion: *Articulate your culture in words and images to better educate the community about who we are truly.*

What came from this group however, was anything but simple. Throughout the past ten months I have had the honor of watching the development of this program. Students, you have proven time and time again that you are insightful and observant; aware of both who you are, and your place in the world. I have watched you grow in technique and in your ability to communicate your thoughts, and I could not be prouder of the work that has resulted from this. As you move forward in your life, I hope that this keen sense of observation serves you well, as you gather opinions and make choices that will determine your future and that of our community. Congratulations!

—Erin Kaminski
Buffalo Public Schools Host Teacher

Our goal in bringing this program to International Prep was to promote a multicultural view of the world, a view which has slowly been clouded by toxic politics, xenophobic nationalism, and irrationality. While only time will tell if we were successful, it is hard to deny that our weekly meetings, exercises, and even dreaded homework assignments left a permanent mark on us all—students, teachers, coordinators, and everyone else involved. There is no denying the increasing importance of maintaining a multicultural perspective as our world grows ever closer together. Thank you to everyone for participating in this experience and experiment. Working so closely with all of you has been a great privilege. I hope that this book will bring back joyful memories when you someday find it in the back of your closets.

—William Vogel
Program Coordinator/Asst. to the Director

Bonus material

scenes from class

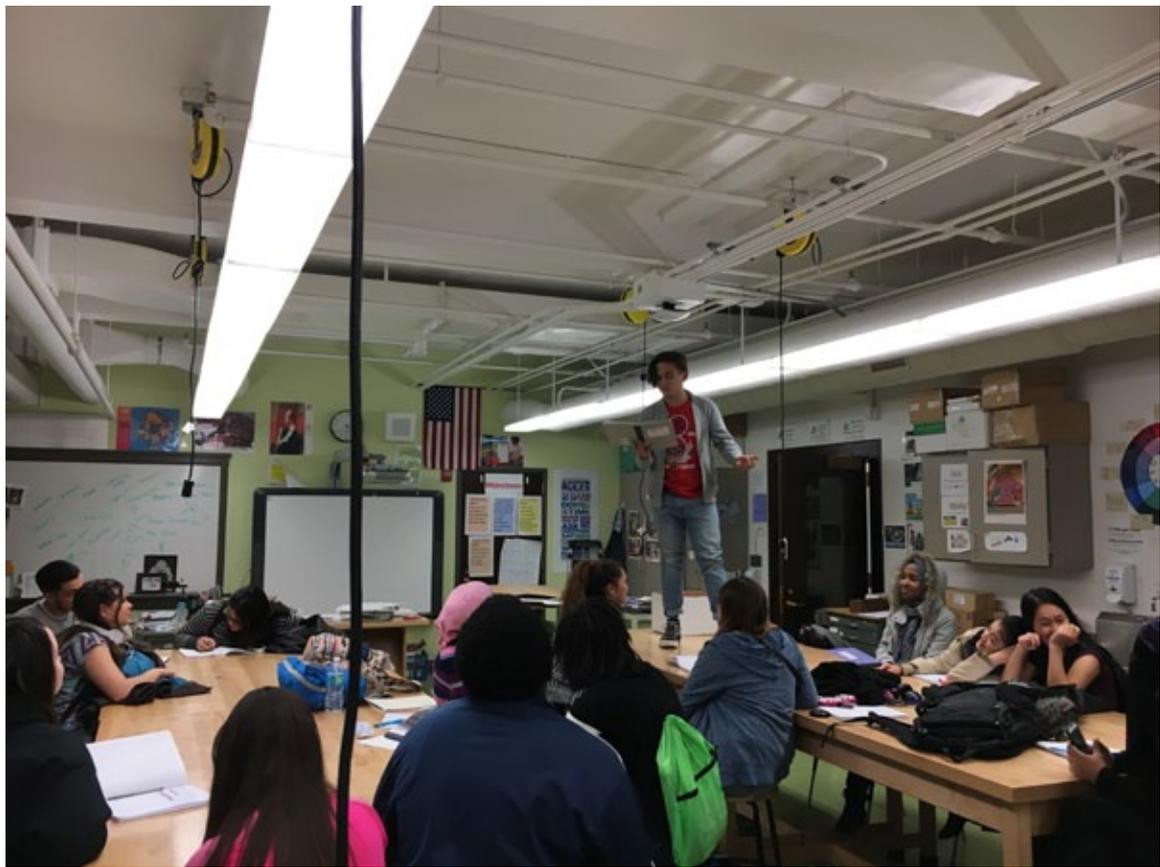
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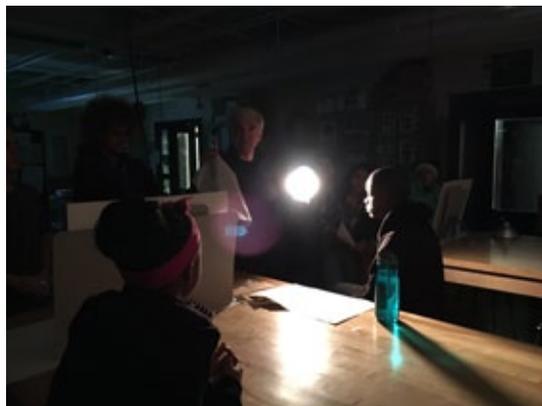
Photos by William Vogel and Bryan Lee















Credits

Educating Beyond the Borders of School

Program Director

Craig Centrie, Ph.D

Program Coordinator

William Vogel

Buffalo Public Schools Host Teacher

Erin Kaminski

Teaching Artists

Sherry Robbins

George Campos

Cheng Yang “Bryan” Lee

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El Museo Francisco Oller y Diego Rivera

Executive Director

Craig Centrie, Ph.D

Asisstant to the Director

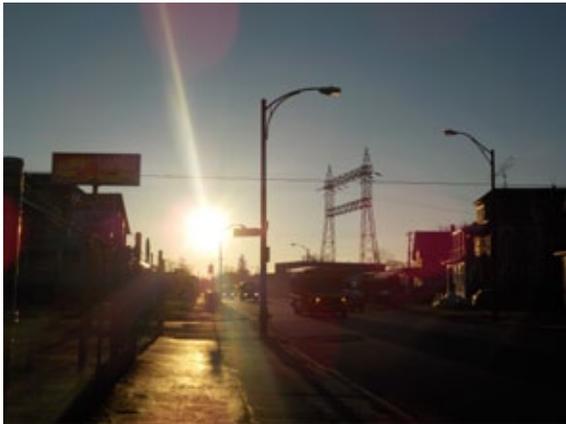
William Vogel

Curator

Cheng Yang “Bryan” Lee

El Museo is a nonprofit arts organization presenting contemporary art and humanities programs with a focus on underserved artists and communities.

Our activities are supported by the County of Erie and County Executive Mark Poloncarz, the City of Buffalo and Mayor Byron Brown, Give for Greatness, The Collective Buffalo, and the continued generosity of our members and donors.



El Museo Francisco Oller y Diego Rivera



2017

