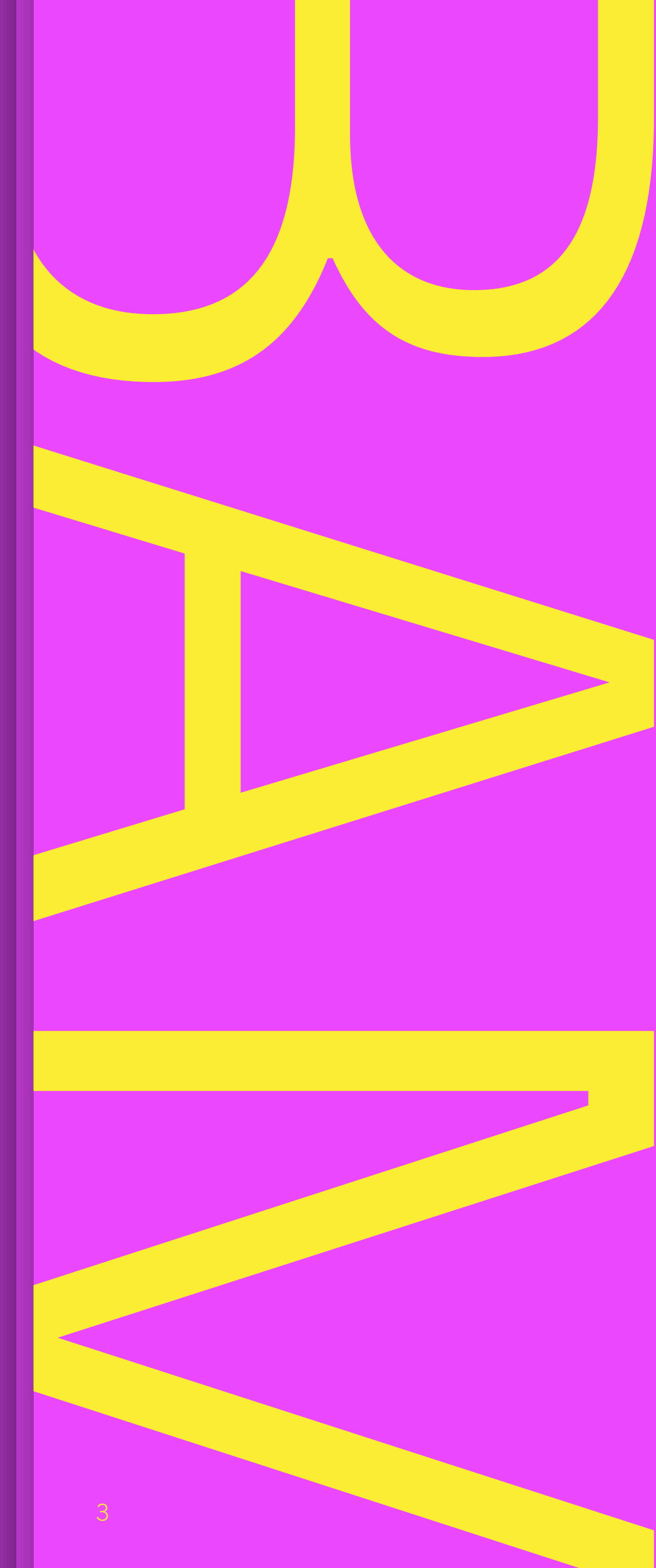




Word. Sound. Power.

in the
Classroom

2025 ANTHOLOGY



Word. Sound. Power. in the Classroom is BAM's in-school poetry residency for high school students.

Each year students explore the art of poetry and spoken word through a chosen theme inspired by history and current events. Over the course of 12 sessions, these young poets found inspiration and cultivated their own love for the written and spoken word. This anthology reflects that sense of discovery and serves as a culminating document of the students' participation in the class.

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Word. Sound. Power. in
the Classroom

Teaching Artists

Jennifer Cendaña Armas is an NYC-born-and-raised performing artist, educator, and community worker committed to telling stories of diaspora. She was a commissioned 2023 artist for Restorative Justice Initiative, was a 2022 Harlem Stage WaterWorks Emerging Artist fellow, and recently served as directing observer and understudy for Elyria at Atlantic Theatre Company. She is also a Social Impact Advisor and Coach with Inspire Justice.



Vee Arumemi is a storyteller and second-generation immigrant who loves food, film, and music. He values authenticity and the vulnerability of expression, creative or otherwise. Vee is ever-curious and always looking for ways to translate inspiration and ideas across different mediums, and to diverse audiences. Recently, he's leaned into filmmaking, but he also loves to write, perform, take photos, and collage. Currently, he's intrigued by finding ways to combine multiple artistic practices and noticing how they inform and compliment one another.

In 2022, Vee self-published a short collection of poetry entitled *member*. Last year, his short "give thanks.," which he wrote and directed, was an Official Selection at the Chain Film Festival. He also completed a multimedia project entitled, *port(als) of entry* in partnership with the Restorative Justice Initiative of NYC.



Gideon Bautista is a Filipino-American actor, playwright, poet, improviser, and teaching-artist based in Brooklyn. Having earned his B.A. in Theatre Education at Emerson College, he's currently working toward his M.A. in Applied Theatre at CUNY's School of Professional Studies.

G.V. Maldonado is a proud Native New Yorker and CUNY alumnus, and has been a professional theater technician and performance artist since 2007 and a working Teaching Artist since 2011. Providing arts education for afterschool programs within New York City with various Arts and Community-Based Organizations, she joined the BAM family in 2016, and also manages the elementary literacy programs at Cypress Hills Local Development Organization. She is the Production Manager at La Pirata Productions and Associate Producer at Danisarte Inc. Her motto is "Theatre is a verb. Go do theatre."

Jashua Sa-Ra has been a musician for over 20 years, an award-winning performance poet for over ten years, and an actor for seven years. As an active artist in his community, he has produced and/or hosted several critically acclaimed performance events, including seven open mic venues, a jazz and poetry showcase, a hip hop showcase, a slam, and a variety of special events. Currently Jashua is the creative director and host of *Saturday Mass Mic*, the most attended open mic in Brooklyn. He also produces and hosts two

events, a weekly performance venue called *The Sun Set*, and a quarterly freestyle competition, *The Core*. Jashua has been creating and implementing arts-infusion curricula for over a decade.

Power to the Poets

We're honoring the power of the poets in an unapologetic celebration of those who give voice to the voiceless through hip-hop and spoken word.

This year's theme, POWER, marks the third and final chapter of our three-year *Word. Sound. Power.* residency curriculum cycle. In the spirit of the Black arts movement of the 60s and 70s and the conscious rap movement of the late 80s and mid-90s, we asked students to explore ideas of power and define it for themselves.

Mikal Amin Lee

Education Manager

Word. Sound. Power. Programming

Boerum Hill School For International Studies

Teacher

Kisha Muir

Teaching Artist

G.V. Maldonado

Christian Camble, 15



ODE TO R&B MUSIC (connection)

Calm or loud, there's so much sound.
Like a wave on the beach
Sound hits my ear.

Like a wave on the beach I hear your rhythms.
like a wave on the beach I see your blues.

The strength of the backbeat makes my ears bleed
happiness.
The emotive vocals that make my heart skip a beat.
I thank you for helping me get through days that could
have been better.
Days that were bitter,
And felt like a stutter,
You were there.

Rhythm and Blues, you filled my clues.



SPLIT APART

Like ying and yang, they should've been.
Split apart, like the red sea.
Now you see, what's different about me,
Or him, or her, or she, or he, or a little baby.
That we can't understand.
The thought runs through heads like quicksand
And we come to understand...
Segregation.

Is this power? Is this how it is meant to be?
It was a never ending cycle

What makes me different? I bleed blood
and shed tears. But for years...segregation.

Are they blinded by the sun to not see
our similarities? So now they foresee...
Segregation.

This may be true, but how will the flower
bloom?
Like soil and water lets grow
together.

Christian Camble, cont.

Broken Trust

Dog rhymes with fog, Fog
reminds me of gloom, I sit
in my room waiting to
be doomed. Like MF DOOM she
said “I’ll be there around
five” but it’s night time, and
it’s around nine. Trust broken
into two, like an angry man
and his broom .

When I saw you, my heart
used to beat fast. But now,
my heart is shattered like,
broken glass. Your friends
are trying to stall while
you don’t pick up my
calls. Trust is now locked
away, in a safe, with
a code, scattered on
different sides of the universe.

I can go on and on for days talking
about “Broken Trust” but i’ll leave

it here in this...

Dust.

Dust left alone in a
corner, just like me.

It’s hard to breathe and it’s hard to see.
My eyes bleed in despair.
And all i can do is listen to
tunes and hope those angry
fumes go to rest.

Marcus Carrier, 15

ODE TO CHUBBS (THE CAT)

Round and orange like the sun
Big and fat lying peacefully on a mat!!
Everyone will have their doubts,
But I will always know your whereabouts

Waiting around like a king waiting to be served
Your finest meal of the day
Having no motivation to get up and play.

Out of all the cats you're one of a kind
Because you're always lying there waiting time
You're patient and gentle waiting to get pets
Lying on the floor watching the sun as it sets;
The largest cat of your litter
But sometimes you can get real bitter,
When you're watching us eat
You can really get us beat

POWER OVER BODY

Pain is an illusion,
Pain isn't there
You might think Pain is everywhere
Pain is in your head
Pain is there hanging on a thread
Pain is fake
but sometimes you just need a break.

MISUSES OF POWER

I see Ms. Use
In the city and on social media
I see Ms. Use
Standing there in blue
I see Ms. Use
Hit and grab without seeing them miss use
I see Ms. Use
With a badge and holding people down.

Zahir Charney, 15



Family

I see my peers,
their family comfort. To a higher tear.
I love my family
I trust my family
I need my family
I conform to my family?
My usual sly smile is lost
I try and force it but my feelings fight back

The clear color diffnes only clear to me
The tatered mark scorthed to my brain
It's pretty clear my looks don't mirror
vactions are hard the confused stares
The cold gaze
I feel the cold sweat down my spine
They don't understand I feel all the eyes
from everyone. They are judmet eyes
Judmet is stray like a rhino in the wild
I know I shouldn't care but I do
My clue is left.
I know they won't catch on
So put on the mask.



Ode to entertainment

One minute I'm in my head
thoughts swirling
A dark shade fanning the smile sway
The next minute you story swallows me
The new world I enter
The new friend I meet
The new setting I stay

Your thoughtful writing see me
Now my worried thoughts flee me
You are my escape
a universe that's never half empty
Your diversity having now struggle with adversity
As much as your new
you can never get old

Our time together is a vast closet
of memories. Your liveliness never fails
Your availability is disciplined
Your words allow a variety of
freedom.

Zahir Charney, cont.

Christmas break

I thought these hours and weeks
laying in bed to rest would
allow me to push my performance
back to its original best.
However my knee feels like a rusty boat
crusted with mold it's joints so stiff
and cold I can feel my heartbeat in my knee.

I think of the time till school hoping
to play again day by day
these dreams blanketed.

Ms. Use

Ms Use is all around
us weather its internal
conflict or greed we see
it every day

I see Ms. Use in a Redhook store
with a manager tag on.
Ms. Use says evil things
and ask things of others
that arent aloud. Ask for pleasure
in return for giving pay.

Milania Felix, 15

Miss Use

Miss Use is part of the government, the president
Miss use dresses fancy in a suit and tie to
show her excessive amount of misused power
Missuse continues to abuse power
One day Missuse's unnecessary abuse will get to her
Soon she will notice someone else misusing their
power.

Damian Ferlay, 15

MS USE

Is police brutality is last where I saw
Ms. Use, like a shadow, under your shoe
waits to be used, Ms. Use.

Ms.Use

Ms. Use, what don't you show me your
true colors and hues.

I have the power to do it but
do I wanna ms. use. I have an urge
to ms use - we all have the
power to misuse so we are
better than ms. use

HIERARCHY

Death, it is a moral
Sight, what we see, the truth or not
Hyrchy is an endless rule. We are Enslaved to a power.
Power we cannot be fought, because if it can—what is
power? Is it a scale, is it an unconditional force.
Power, what is power. People love Power, earth has
power, our solar system has power, our states have
power, but an ant, does he have power in
his ant world. Is our power mere reflections of those
ants. Power is every wear, but even power is weak.
Then I pose the question, what is power.

LOVE IS POWER

The way my heart is attired to you
Time without, shows how powerful you are.
Your scent, your feel, your smile, you make me
ponder if love is power. My obsession over all
of you, my fixation on you, power. Love is
power. The heart is always stronger than
the mind.

—To N

Amelie (Avery) Gardner, 15

DOMINO SOCIETY

What power does a slave
to society have

Shackles of interconnecting each other
one after another

What power do teenagers have
with no political voice

Only freedom in fashion
wanting power unfathomed

So what may we do?
Unimportant voices like you

With nothing given in hand
only the truth with commands

To tell a lie, and walk away
by a corrupted government

Welcome to america, start loving it
or get left behind.

By a chained society
who bow to hierarchy

There is no way to escape
to the gun violence and rape

When you are shackled together
only influencing each other.

WINTER BREAK POEM

As I sit in my english classroom
break is over, hands are raised
we are asked to write a poem
my week doesn't deserve to be praised.

I hung out with no one, family or friends
My bed was slept in and sat on
My messages unopened by others
delivered from dusk to dawn

I cradled myself in a the corner
After my moms words so coarse
She loves to threaten me out the house
Im sure she loved her divorce

I am tired of winter breaks
And i am tired of school
I have nowhere to go and nothing to do
drowning in an endless deprivation pool.

Avery Gardner, cont.

Tomorrow and I

Tonight I sit on the edge of my seat
Where nothing else is worth living for
and nothing else matters
Across from me sits the following day
tomorrow

Both a mockery and a fatigue
to meet every morning
at 12:00 am exactly.

The following day i will wake up
And I sit on the seat on the other side
Of the dinning room table

Where life is worth clawing
and tugging at
much like a helpless infant
reaching for its mother.
The only similarity being;
we both cannot do it on our own anymore
or at all

Tonight will be different
and I will Be different
I am the mind that I have
and I will learn from the actions I've taken

For everything matters more tonight
than yesterday and none of tomorrow nights
matter anymore

Now sitting at the dining room table
the days that follow will sit alone

Tomorrow night will no longer matter
for I will not meet it.

Luna Hunter, 15

SPRING

Spring

As the sun spills over and melts away the frozen
polar

The birds begin chirping

The bears come returning

From their lair

Hiding from winter scare

As they sleep waiting for the warmth to unleash
when they will wake up and feast

Spring

As flowers grow and animals awaken

The world defrost and starts to glow

As the sky showers and washes away the gray

The sun shines and the children play

These are the beauties of spring and all it has to
bring.

ODE TO NIGHT

A break from daylight

A rest from life

A calm darkness to harness a busy world

In the quiet of night

As your dreams take flight

Nighttime.

As the stars twinkle

And the street lights Ignite

While you rest your head

Cozy in your bed

Dreading the feeling of morning

When you awaken and wish it never left
nighttime.

Excited for the return

awaiting it's presence

When finally again

The moon shines iridescent
nighttime

Iris Maiuri-Winter, 15



Power we hold (draft)

Power is the strength
we hold. A quiet force.
It lifts us up and lights our way
and helps us face another day power

Ms. Use

by Iris Miuri Winter, 15
Ms use is a police officer who wears a
Badge, if you call you her she will be there
In a flash. Ms use, ms use,
You can't escape her abuse. Ms use.

Ode to family

Family is love. Warm and true
A place to laugh and place to
bloom.
Through happy days and times of
fear.
they're always close, always near.

Luna Hunter & Iris Miuri Winter, 15



The Power We Hold

Luna: Power is the ability to speak your mind
no matter who is listening (Power)
Power is confidence to be yourself
No matter who is watching (Power)
I have power (Power)
You have power (Power)
We all have power (Power)
How is the strength we hold (Power)
an invisible force
Iris: It lifts us up and lights our way
and helps us face another day.

Elisia Lawrence

MS. USE

Ms. Use is a police officer
she wears a uniform and a badge
Ms. Use is supposed to be a person we can trust
But instead she takes our trust and abuses it
On the streets and says put your hands behind
your back
He says what are my crimes where are my rights
His rights were misused
Ms. Use thinks what she did was ok
But we must know it is not
It's not ok, not today not anyday.

Power

Knowledge is power
They say strength is power
They say authority is power
But knowledge is key
With knowledge you can gain strength
With knowledge you can gain authority
Knowledge is power

Ode to my bed

My bed, my joy and pride
My favorite place to sleep and lie
After a long day of work I look forward to you
My love for you is very dear and true

The Winter is so dark and cold
My bed is always there to hold,
My pillows blankets and toys
My bed is my pride and joy

Nailea Lazaro



Money is Power

Money doesn't buy
happiness but
for me it does
Money buys what i
want and need
money, money, money

Ode to Friends

Friends are there when
skies are grey, they
help you smile and light
the way.
Through every laugh and
every tear, they're close they're
always near.

Tessa Lipman, 15



Ode to Bees

Buzz, Buzz, Buzz
What an annoying sound.
Sting, Sting, Sting
What an annoying feeling.
Bees, Bees, Bees
I hate them!
But what you don't realize ...
Bees are the honey that sweetens bitter tea
Bees are the sweet smell of flowers in the spring
Bees are the oxygen we need to breathe
Bees are the beautiful world we live in.
How could we ever live without you?
The truth is, we can't.

Memory is power

You try your hardest to forget, but it will always haunt
you.
Memory is power
You must stay focused, but the good times create a
flood, plastering a permanent smile on your face
Memory is power
No matter what you do, it will always live in your mind,
Memory is power

Tessa Lipman, cont.



Gratitude

Walking down second street
A wave of gratitude washes over me.
It sinks through my brain.
Each thought elongates my grin.
Family, friends, funds, food.
I believe I can have it all.
My jacket feels warmer, my feet feel lighter
The world is a shade brighter.

Jackson Own, 15



Rest

Rest is painful
If you don't rest
you'll be tired

Rest is good
If you are tired
You may get fired

I love rest
because it is relaxing and
powerful

Energized and
awake

Tyteniah Pankey, 15

Ms. Use

I have seen misuse of power in the police department, the government.

Ms. Use is a white man in a uniform with a badge. Ms. Use is the “protection” given to the streets of New York. Ms. Use is the misuse of power used by those “superior” than us.

Ode to my mother

My sweet loving mother
Like a lion with her baby cubs
Always providing and protecting
She takes on her duty with pride even though
Sometimes her life coincides.
Even on bad days she shines, the star of my life
Her light never going dull
Never unnoticed.

Power is me

Power is me, Power is you. Power is us,
Power can be true. Is power real? What
does power mean to you?
Power is the mind, heart, body and soul. Power is not
the ability to control.

Denim Purdie 15

Ms. Use

I see misuse at 125th Street
On the Green line. Wealth is a
Badge during the day time.

Power

Power? What does that mean, you might ask.
Power? The ability to control others.
Power? The physical strength you have over someone.
Power? Is not about the control over others. It's what's
in your heart and mind.

Story of life

Have you ever just been up and
Think of the meaning of life like
What is the exact one day
Us humans weren't born

Ethan Valentin

Ms. Use

Ms. Use is on Pitkins Ave with a ski mask while the
moon shines bright

Ms. Use

Beneath the net a rhythm flows
A game of grit when passengers
Each bound echoes dreams untold
On couch of fire fearless mold
The power to rise, to break and sour
A battle within, at war

ode to basketball

A game of rhythm bounce and fishnet
A ball that ones thrown boundless night
You glide from hands to the sky
In every dribble, every catch

Your court, a stage where dreams ignite
Each pass a spark, each shot a light
Your turn the floor to hallowed ground
What swift sure footed movement

In nets you swish, a perfect song
The echoings the crowd belongs

With every dunk a high flying leap
You lift us high, from ground, from deep
O hardwood when we one fall
When sweat one hops on you
You give us strength, you teach us how
To stand to fight to take a vow

You rule adone of grace on a might
A battle fierce both day and night
A team, united hearts aligned
A game of passion and of mind

Through buzzer beaters and final score
You have us yearning craving more
A game with joy and pain
You shape our souls and free our minds

In basketball we find our place
Within every game we
O ball, o court, o dreams to
You are here, our sacred space

Ethan Valentin, cont.



who i am

I am a story, a world untold
A spark of fire, both fierce and bold
A tapestry woven with threads of light
Dreams that worn through day and night

I am the calm before the storm
A heart that beats in truest form
A seeker of truths both near and far
An endless journey, a guiding star

Soraya Ward



ode to rain

Dear Rain,

I hate you. I despise you.
Every time it rains, I feel dead, too.
You've taken my sun away from me.
You've taken my light.
Gosh, I hate you so much.
I know I'm right.

Right to hate you,
Right to despise you,
Right to feel as if I've been lied to, right?

But am I or are you just misunderstood?
Maybe this time you were doing something good?

Without you, there'd be no color to the seeds,
or the flowers, nor the leaves.
You take away my sun,
But you give her a break to rest, not to steal her shine.
You give her time,
Time to rejuvenate for us.
Without you, she would be exhausted.

Soraya Ward, cont.

So, I thank you
And I love you.
You.

MS. USE

You can find Ms. Use anywhere
In the world and you won't
Even have to try looking hard.
You can find her in a precinct
As a police officer in uniform
Or in regular clothing.

WHAT ARE YOU PROUD OF

Something I am proud of is
My grades because I've worked
Really hard to have the scores
I've always wanted. A lot of
The time my grades have been a
Reflection of other events in my
Life. I was always caught up by other things or
preoccupied.

What am I proud of?

Ines Assemat-Tessandier

ode to sleep

You take the light away when all is dark
You bring the morning into view
Like a skip thought time you leap
You bring us into the security of our golden beds
Tucked into the curiosity of where we go at night
We ponder wondering where what who you are
Why do you take us away to these awful places
Floating on playful clouds of dreams
Or storms of mischievous nightmares

Ms. Use

Ms. Use doesn't respect her city she trashes robs and
destroys it.
Ms. Use is unpredictable with no intended goals.
The road Ms. Use is taking guarantees a future behind
Stripping her of freedom
She doesn't change but has left a massacre of her city

Ines Assemat-Tessandier, cont.



birth

The bright light blinding my fragile eyes
Blazing burning white emerging from the darkness
I once knew
There's no more space for only me
I am now sharing this unknown world
This new world where your thought's have been
Thought hundreds of times
Your actions have been copied, repeated, replayed
But never changed
This new world where everyone is exploring as am I
This new world people are living for the first time
As am I



Teacher

Deirdre Deloatch

Teaching Artist

Jennifer Cendaña Armas

Cultural Academy of Arts & Sciences

Chelsey Mayris, 15



The Real Me

To be loved is to be seen
Love is the most complicated thing
The thing about it is that whenever you find someone
new, it redefines your definition of love.
Which is worse ? Loving someone you cant have or
having someone you cant love

I never thought this would happen.
All I can do now is imagine how things could've been
All I can think about is what I could've done to fix the
arguments before they even begun.
Sometimes you just have to let go and let things be.

I'm done reminiscing and wishing you came back
The cracks are beginning to show
Now it's time for me to grow
—Into who I want to be
The REAL Chelsey
The real me

Makayla Booker, 15



Who I Am

Dance is an art that's unimaginable
Feeling free and not being judged
Feels like you're laying on a cloud
A disguise, they say, but that's the real me

If I could, I would wear this disguise every day.
Whenever I'm mad, I dance
When I'm sad, I dance
When I'm happy, I dance

Dance is my soul
My comfort place
My spot
The things that fill this hole in my heart

I dance to let go of all my emotions
I live to dance
I was born to dance
I am dance
The way the music makes me flow
I feel like I'm in a dream

Makayla Booker, cont.



No comments, just music
No problems, just flow
My soul goes with the music
My soul goes to the beat
I finally feel free
Am I different or am I me?

Maybe I'm not around the right company

Jamari Descartes, 15



In Every Heart

In every heart
A truth should grow:
All are equal
None below
Through cracks where hatred dares to creep
A world divided
Torn by skin
A battle fought
No one can win
To let us rise
Let hatred fail
Embrace the beauty in us all
For in the end
We are the same
Humans bound by love, not blame

Zawadi Simpson, 15



My Life

My life is an ongoing road
Different directions
Different reflections
Traffic jams
Life challenges
I first opened my eyes
Viewing a once lovely world
Continuing on
Went to a basic school
My speed picked up
I swifted through basic
Until it slowed to a stop
Out of gas
Unable to graduate
I started again but went off route
Started primary school but stopped midway
Due to COVID-19
Reached a gas station
Reached out to my mom
Full again to be en route
A little encouragement to help push me in life
Reached my destination
In my present life
Enjoying life and living the right way

Chase Cox, 15



Blackout Poem Based on James Baldwin's Speech

I want to be free
The people who settled the country
Came here for one reason
There was people who had never heard of machines
We eliminated them
We killed them

Arrianna Meran-Archer, 15

Rebound

You are a rebound. Your whole life was built off it. Rebound is a funny word. You might think, me? A rebound? Ha! But put in perspective...not so funny is it? You might wanna laugh. Maybe your homegirl is dating someone to get over another. Funny. But. Really. Put. It. In. Perspective.

What is a rebound anyways? Why does it matter? The action of going too damn fast, wanting but not needing, craving but not eating, Trading in. Think it. Feel it. You are a rebound. What? It's funny isn't it? Laugh! Laugh.

You're the youngest in your family. Mom tried with your older sister but she's....different. She's too late. Instead of creating a better life she created a mirror. She smokes? Double it. Party after school? Hell yeah! But who am I talking about? Mom, the teacher or the eldest...the student. The look on your mother's face as she realizes her first choice—I mean daughter!!-- skipped school to smoke, a tale only she wished to live. They're too alike: she messed up. She went to a bar. She met a guy. And now you're here. Now you're pushed, forced, molded into someone you don't even recognize. So she doesn't feel the guilt, the shame of her eldest eating herbs for breakfast and a smoky dinner.

You're pushed to be the best, the example, the goal, the NEW eye of the family. All the things the eldest was meant to achieve.

You are the rebound.

Breaking your limbs for someone who won't help fix it.

Teachers

Bilal Wrights

Vanessa Osborne

Dondrew Armstrong

Denise Williams

Sarah Wolly

Collette Samuels

Teaching Artist

Jennifer Cendaña Armas

PS 373
Brooklyn
Transition Center

Mumin Adam

Home

Home is a beautiful place to live with your friends and family

Home is living in peace

Home is where everybody comes together as a big family

Home is the place where you keep your comfort and security

that brings you the opportunity to stay and work.

My home is Sudan.

I grew up there.

This is a beautiful place that you can explore,
enjoying new foods that you eat and more.

You see palm trees and grass grow from the ground.

You can see the Nile River from the north of Egypt all the way to South Sudan.

Home is a beautiful place.

My home is Sudan.

Bernard Gil

I Am

I am funny and caring.

I wonder what other people think of me.

I listen to love songs and relaxing music.

I see people and trees.

I want women to understand me better.

I am funny, caring, and calm.

I pretend I am nobody.

I smell food and cologne.

I feel confident about myself.

I worry about myself.

I cry when girls don't understand my feelings.

I am funny and caring.

Tristan Lewis



My Five Senses

The smell I like is pizza.

I also like the smell of perfume.

The smell I don't like is dog poop and smelly
bathrooms.

I like to taste Boston cream and vanilla with sprinkles
on top doughnuts.

I also like to taste chocolate ice cream.

I don't like to taste expired food.

I like to touch my cat's fur because it really feels fluffy.

I also like to touch my blanket because it's really soft.

I don't like to touch insects and slimy things.

I like to see a lot of people walking and cars and buses
running.

I also like to see birds in the sky flying.

I don't like to see people fighting in the streets.

I like to hear good rap music and birds singing and
chirping.

I also like to hear lots of people singing.

I don't like to hear traffic and cars honking.

Humberto Lugo Jr.



To Rakeem

In a world where love is an eternal flame

I found you, my heart's forever claim.

Through the twists and turns life's path may take

Our love, unbreakable, it will forever make.

Like a gentle breeze caressing the trees

Your love whispers sweet melodies to me.

In your arms I find peace

A love so profound, it will never cease.

With every touch, my soul ignites

As your love envelopes me in its light.

In your eyes I see a love so pure

A love that forever will endure.

You are the sun that lights my day

The moon that guides me on my way.

With each passing moment, my love grows

Overflowing, like a river that forever flows.

In the depths of my heart you reside

Your love, a treasure I'll forever hide.

Humberto Lugo Jr., cont.

Together we create a love story so rare
A tale of two hearts, a love beyond compare.

I pen these words
So you know how much you mean

To me as this poem comes to an end
Know that without you in my life I am not complete

I will need you forever
For my world to be complete.

James Parrish

Who I Am

I am caring and chill
I wonder what I want to do next year
I hear cars honking
I see chairs
I want a game console
I am caring and chill

I pretend to know someone
I smell cheese pizza
I feel tired
I worry that someone might get hurt
I cry because someone might die on me
I am caring and chill

I understand I need some space
I say I believe in someone
I dream about getting a girlfriend
I try to get a girlfriend
I hope I get a PS5
I am caring and chill

Khalima Smith



Just About Me

I am proud and smart

I wonder if unicorns are real

I hear the sound of music

I see a roller coaster

I want a new apartment

I am powerful

I pretend to be a chef

I smell something that's tasty

I feel my Auntie's stuffed bear

I worry about my future

I cry because my Grandma passed

I am fearless

Raleak Simmons



I AM

I am hard working and good

I wonder who created the first painting

I hear hissing in the walls

I see a giant cat with three hands

I want a good easy life

I am a good listener

I feel my hands are dry

I worry about surviving another day

I cry about not tasting good food

I am hard working and good

I understand that some days are going to be hard

I say people can live life to their fullest

I am a good listener

Devinn Best



Me

I am tall and handsome
I wonder why people get hurt
I hear loud fire trucks
I see the fast moving ambulance
I want to learn to talk to people.

I am tall and handsome
I pretend to shampoo my hair
I smell fried chicken
I feel warm water
I worry about nothing
I try not to be upset.

I am tall and handsome
I understand I have to go to school
I dream of getting a job
I try my best in class
I hope to be successful
I am tall and handsome.

Saron Bitew



I Am Beautiful

I am beautiful.
I wonder why I am short.
I hear the rain drops.
I see the bright sun.
I want a job at Burlington.

I am beautiful.
I pretend to sing.
I love beautiful things.
I smell the food.
I feel the rain.
I worry about myself.
I cry when I am sad.
I am beautiful

I am beautiful

I am beautiful.

Gabriella Cogdell



What Is Home?

Home is New York.
Home is where I can relax and feel safe with my family.
I have two brothers. They are older than me.
I like when I get to hug my mother and brothers.
Their touch lets me know they care.

Home is where memories are made.

Marvin Smalls



I Am Who I Am

I am tall and handsome
I wonder about a lot of things
I hear loud noises in the park
I see the sunlight
I want to go out and play
I am very good at football.

I pretend to be very good at football
I pretend to be the best
I smell garbage on the sidewalk
I feel the cold wind in the winter.

I cry when I get very upset
I am getting better at math
I understand life is not perfect
I say traveling is fun
I try to make things right
I hope for a better tomorrow.

I am who I am.

Hayley Owen



For Jamaica

Home is Jamaica
Home has many beaches
Home is sunshine and banana trees
Home is where I smell jerk chicken
Home is where I hear the good reggae
Home is Jamaica

Jermaine Brown



This Is My Home

Brooklyn is the place I was born
It is full of big buildings, many people, good food, and
great music.
The streets are filled with many things to see.

Home is cozy.
It is a place for me and my family.
Home is where I belong
I can truly be me

This is my home
Brooklyn.

Jaylen Martin



Home To Me

Home to me is family, tall buildings, cars, buses, and trains.

A lot of fine beautiful girls, money flowing and winds blowing.

Home to me is Bed-Stuy and bacon, egg, and cheese.

New York breeze, while I take my girl out to eat.

It's just me and shorty in peace.



Teacher

Ms. Jasmin
Fearon-Weakes

Teaching Artist

Vee Arumemi

Teachers Preparatory High School

Damier Smith, 15



Power and control

Power, power, power is something you find joy in
Power is something you feel free with
Power is the strength in your heart
Power is the muscle in your body
Power is something that can corrupt
When you give something power it has the possibility
to have a negative or positive impact and when that
power turns
into control, it manifests usually in a negative way
something you find joy in turns into addiction
something you find freedom in turns into craving
The strength of your heart, body & mind weakens
But the good thing is you have control over what you
give power,
so whatever things control you, you have POWER
to take its power over you back.

Davieliz Donaldson, 14



Fear

I am the butterflies in your stomach
The feeling that you get when you're scared
The feeling that you get when worried
The feeling that you get when you're crying
The feeling that you get when you're happy
When you feel down and when you're hungry
Fear can be dominating you but you could stay calm
And fight it out.

Maria Rodriguez, 15



Grieving.

Going back to THAT day, THAT month, THAT year
reminding me how much it hurt me, how it took
away a part of me that I never got back,
GRIEVING.

realizing that they are never coming back
in this universe,
GRIEVING.

Looking back at their old memories, their old happy
self, my heart breaks into pieces
when I could only see them in my dreams,
GRIEVING.

hits me randomly through the day, grieving
is weird, taking me back to where it all happened,
GRIEVING.

Their existence is just a memory now,
GRIEVING.

Convincing yourself that you are fine,
when you know
you are not,
GRIEVING.
GRIEVING...

Julani Desir, 15



Fear

Fear can affect you at any age,
Some come and some go,
Some come and grow down below,
Even when you fear NOTHING,
You ALWAYS feel something.

Most people fear being caged or locked away
or maybe just afraid,

But I fear being nothing,
as in being NOTHING.

As I would dream, I want to prove myself and become
something,

A Name,

A Person,

An Inspiration, FEARLESS.

Amhalia Samedi, 15



Music is Life: MIZIK SE LAVI

When I listen to music
I am in my own little world
I be at peace
Like nobody's there
It's just me and me only
Like nothing's there, like I'm alone
In this big suffocating universe
I feel very elevated, free, peaceful, happy
Everything is so beautiful and colorful
but sometimes it is black and white
Not everything and everyone's perfect
I'm not...
Music makes me feel a way
That nobody has ever made me feel before...
I feel really understood
When I have nobody to talk to,
I ran straight into the arms of music
I put my headphones on and let it take me away
Far away from everything
I let the lyrics pour and I'm flying...

Derick Singleton, 15



Live in Fear

I constantly lived in fear,
day by day
I picked up the Bible to ask God,
to take the fear away
but I was too afraid, too ashamed
I was afraid God might not help
I was afraid I couldn't be saved,
until that day God showed me
a sign, a dream, a crazy dream
I was stuck in my head,
nobody with me
Just me and the dark,
until I saw a light
I thought I died but no
a man came out of the light
it was God, He came to me and said
"My son don't be afraid," He put his hands
on my shoulders
and I woke up; I wasn't afraid anymore
I felt like a new person, a person
who wasn't afraid anymore
all the fear I once had
was now gone.

Dominique Verneige, 16



A Voice Called Fear

“Don’t do it,” he says
“You’re not good enough,
I will kill all your dreams
with all my dark beams.
You’re a scared little boy
you will never make it out
you’re a nothing,
you will never sprout.”
Don’t let him win,
you are all you need
Fear is
inevitable
but you are
indomitable

Gabriel Garcia, 15



Marigold!

Life is short, too short
once you grow, you’ll regret it
The idea of life is weird
You’d love to take risks
yet, you’re scared around here mentally
your fear takes over big time
How long will fear hold you in its grasp?
Lift up your head,
at the end of the day
life’s a risk
You won’t regret it, I promise
Life was meant to be fun,
to enjoy every moment
it’s your choice
if you want to or not;
the memories are worth it
No matter if you get punished later
because you’ll look back
and be grateful for those times
Soon, you’ll realize
that the good times
are over
and all you’ll have, are memories
Kill your enemies
Save your friends
Don’t panic

Gabriel Garcia, cont.



It'll be all apologies later
Once you open your eyes,
it'll be six colored pictures
all in a row

of a marigold

Yelmer Guevara, 18



Elephant

The elephant was crying because
he didn't want to sleep
Sleep,
little elephant,
the moon will hear
you crying

Elefante

El elefante estaba llorando porque
No quería dormir
Dormir,
pequeño elefante,
que la luna
te oirá llorar

Yelmer Guevara, cont.



Clear Nights

On clear nights I solve the problem
of being alone
I invite the moon
and
with my shadow,
we are three

Noches claras

En las noches claras soluciono el problema
De estar solo
invito a la luna
y
Con mi sombra,
somos tres

Love

I love you
like soulmates love each other
like others, like true loves
love each other
with passion, with dedication
with all your hearts

Amar

Te amo
como a un alma gemela ámense unos a otros.
como los demás, como el amor verdadero
ámense unos a otros.
con pasión, con dedicación.
con todo tu corazón

Teacher

Mr. Villaronga

Teaching Artist

Gideon Bautista

Passages Academy

Jamel



Soon Be Home

I need to see home and feel a nice
Shower. Us blacks are looked at wrong
But it's hard for me to make a song
I don't want my lyrics to belong while
I'm writing this. Someday this
Will all be gone. So get me home, I need
A shower. Everyone against me shows
My power everyone still against us.
Here. I should receive flowers. Power is
What you got somewhat born with
but doing what's right? That's power. that's something
That comes with it.



What Brings Me Joy

Is being with the people I love the most,
Family and friends.
Because they gonna do whatever
It takes to make sure I'm good
Especially family, they gonna go all
Out for me.

I love the way they treat me and make me feel loved.
I love when one of us or anybody don't
Have anything and we still find a
Way to get them what they don't have.

Here's how it makes me feel
It makes me feel cared for like
Someone really wants me to be loved
And things they do make me feel like
My friends would never change on me

With this, I can
Treat everybody great. Shows me how
To become a great person: can
Become something instead of looking
Back and not believing in myself.

Isaiah



“In the Church”

My spirit is strongest when I’m in Church.
It sounds like gospel music. I carry life
inside of me passed down by Jesus.
I walk thru fear like it is nothing.
My power doesn't shout, it walks. Even when
I’m tired. I remember that God is on my side.
And that’s when I know I am great.

Artist Statement

I am Isaiah
I come from Bushwick BK
I believe in God
My power comes from God
I am inspired by my family.
One day I will have my own business.

Pharrell



Artist Statement

I am Pharrell
I come from Da Floss, but a certain section
I believe in myself
My power comes from my mind
I am inspired by my future
One day I will be where I want

Untitled

We got the power
But some people hate
Yea they give us flowers
But deep down they fake

Chant Poem

Why do I see the dead bros every time I sleep
Why do I see the things that I did on that street
Why do I hear the shots pop the door lock the screech
Why do the loudest in the room be the fastest on they
feet
They talkative on Instagram in person they don’t speak
I’m a flossy baby everything I do gotta be flee
Had to turn the bass off cuz it’s deeper than a beat
If everything is movin’ why take a seat

JJ



Artist Statement

I am JJ
I come from the BX
I believe in money and family
My Power comes from my dad
I am inspired by my brothers
One day I can be a free man

“What brings me joy”

My family because
if i didn't have them I don't know what
to do without them I need love,
money and my girlfriend we need joy sometimes
Dear family I appreciate what ya
did for me. You feed my mind.
You give me and my brother so much love.
you put me on to good music.
I need my brother with me all the
time so I can guide him through the right path.



Time Machine

Imagine you are a machine. I'm a
Time machine I let people travel
In time to the Past or Future to make
the right decision and to bring back
things.

Untitled

My spirit is strongest when I'm free.
It sounds like freedom.
I carry love inside of me,
passed down from my Dad.
I walk through fear
With my head up high.
My power doesn't shout
it stay quiet.
Even when I'm tired, I remember I going to sleep.
And that's when I know
I woke up.

***Machine Builder***

Am a machine build for money moves
Examples (Chase) (ATM) (Bank of America).
Which makes me feel like I got control
over every \$ of every bank.
My parts are to keep everybody's
bank account safe, make sure their balance is equal,
Keep the money checks in order so no mistakes are
done.

Artist Statement

I am Joseph R
I am creative, could draw, paint
I come from a place where
I was my only backup
I believe in myself and god

***Untitled***

Love is a blessing
Love is powerful
Love is difficult
Love is Fake
Love is a drug

Dear Brotha

wishing the best for you,
always praying for you
to make it back home
from the system. missing every moment,
even the little ones matter. always
will appreciate everything
you did in my life, plus raising me like
“I was your son” instead
of just being
a brother.

Jacob



Systems of Power

Blackhawk is a machine.
its parts are blades, engine, yoke,
When the machine is running, its job is to protect and
destroy
It sounds like roaring, it moves like lightning.
When the machine fly, I hide.
One day, the machine will hide and I will fly.

Chris



I am

I am Chris.
I come from brooklyn.
I believe in God.
My power comes from my mom.
I am inspired by my family.
one day ima be a famous rapper.
one day ima be rich

Untitled

My spirit is strongest when I'm with my friends.
It sounds like an explosion.
I walk through fear like a lion.
My power doesn't shout it talks seriously
Even when I'm tired I remember everything
And that's when I know: I am Chris.

Keymar



I am a machine

I am a machine built for my future
My parts are having confidence, being strong
and doing what I have to do. I run on intelligence.
When I break down, I need time to recover.
The world tries to program me to do better in life,
But I rewrite my code to do great.

I am

I am god's creation
I come from a good spot light
I believe that I can do anything
My power comes from my family
I am inspired by future stars
One day I will be the star

my spirit is strongest

when I am alone,
It sounds like Z Z Z.
I carry confidence inside me, passed down from my
family.
I walk through fear like a walk in the park
My power doesn't shout it, it motivates the spark
Even when I'm tired. I remember my job.
And that's when I know I am him to remind.

Syquan



Untitled

I love my girl
I am her world
I wanna buy her pearls
She wanna do my curls
Take her on a flight
Make her feel nice
Buy her a room, turn off the lights.

Wake up in the morning walk on the
Beach feeding her grapes.

Artist Statement

I am \$yquan
I come from Far Rock
I believe everyone could do whatever
They want if they put their mind to it
My power comes from my mom
I am inspired by big brothers
One day I would be rich, have a kid, family.

Teacher

Mr. Evans

Teaching Artist

Jashua Sa-Ra

School For Classics High School

Aaron Galindo



I will be able to graduate
I want to succeed
I am nice
I want to make my parents proud
I am kind
I will be able to achieve
I am somebody

Jadiel Batista



I am Praise of God
I am in control of all seas
Under God's name
I flow greatness into people
Who are in need
Of love and happiness

Angelly Grullon



I am an artist
That will change the world
With fashion designs
By hearing your comments
I will create it by your choices
I will like to make the world
A better place
With my designs

Tanjika Rapa



I am smart
I know I can do whatever I want
I love myself
I am a wonderful person
And I will reach my dream

Dymin Scott



I am an artist
That helps their family members out
Like never let them down
Or never let them feel sad
Make them feel happy
Not mean to each other
Cuz we should not
Treat each other mean

Brea Sessoms



I find you stunnin'
Let's go to the beach,
Get some sun in
Let's go out to sea
Where it's just you and me
It'd be such a fun day
Don't you agree?

Shanellie Ocasio



I am here
But not here
I'm invisible
But I am seen
I am seen
But I'm not heard
This is my life

Kamaria Manson



Never a reason
To stay
Always a reason
To go
And don't come back
Don't show your face
Just don't come back
I know it hurts to say
But life moves on
I know it was love
This and love that
But love can get you
A heart attack
Hopefully
That's not a fact
But...
Love is not just a word
You say it's action you show
Hopefully this helps you
Grow

Akeilah Buchanan



Just like the waves
That kiss the shore
People will always come and go
Nothing remains the same
In a world
That faces change everyday
So when God tells you
“It’s time to let go”
I hope you have the courage
To do so

London Gaffney



Most people don’t live
They survive
Caught up in a vicious cycle
Of doubt, grief, and misery
I say it like it is
But what have I got
To love?
I’m all out for helping you
Not hiding from what’s real
And I’m living my dream life
So what’s next
Is to help those in need
Realize
What you’re missing out on
With all that doubt, grief, and misery
Is real life
Right now
Your reality’s so warped
It’s unreal
Head’s in clouds of pain
And past
When what’s happening
Is the future
Now
Accept
Move on
Start afresh

London Gaffney, cont.

See the possibilities
And bring your head back
To the sun

Allison Ortiz

My power is premonition/intuition/imagination
One time me and my mama were watching my
little brother play with this Hot Wheels inside my
parents' room. I would say I was around 10 when
this happened. Me and my mama were talking about
something I forgot about now that I think back to it. At
a certain point in this conversation, my step-dad had
walked in, so I decided to say, "Imagine if someone
got hit in the face with one of the cars!" Soon enough,
about 5 minutes later, when a car was launched with
the toy, it hit my mother's face. So I felt really bad, as if
I jinxed it, but we laughed it off.

Angel Green

What power do I have
The power I have is singing
The power I have is writing
The power I have is doing handstands
A power I have is playing a game
I am an artist that could
Sing and perfect the world
And make them proud
To have the power of knowledge

Fatima Diallo

(Translated by Google from French)
The art of listening with a cup of coffee
In hand, a world of emotions
Of open mind and all my ears
I am here to listen to you
Your voice from home
Mixed with passionate love
And a hint of sweetness.
I am here I listen to you
Your elysian smile is back
Your celestial soul
Now rests with an open heart
And all my tears
I am here
I listened
The invisible tears
That flow inside are the most
Difficult to dry

Shamar Pierson

I hope you find somebody
More toxic
And y'all go through way more
Arguments than we did
You better give him
The same terrible treatment
I know this just the beginning
And this gets deep
But I got my reasons
I put my work in
It wasn't worth it
My stress turned you
To the person for somebody else
I made you worth it
For somebody else
I endured all your flaws
Till I broke through all the walls
Of your guard
Now you're perfect
For somebody else
I know she somewhere
With a good guy
I know she is out
With a guy
That push a pretty penny
Her friend
Just let me know

She said he gets
More paper than me
There goes my ego
That stuff is weak though
My heart is cold
It's brick
My heart is like
Shaq at the free throw
Trying to get you back
With all these cheap girls
And you didn't even peep though
I let you take
Till there was nothing left of me
I've seen
Till there was nothing left to see
I knew she would leave me
Cause when it's all said and done
All I got is me

Makia Peterson



I am an artist
That is a writer of books and poems
For people to know
The world
Better
And see how amazing it is
And it's not all bad

Damionne Grant



Intuition

One Sunday I was stopped by police because of how weird I was looking. I had a gut feeling something was bound to happen. Me, I didn't think much of it. Someone had gotten shot, and I was stopped by cops. They asked me if I had any weapons on me. I said just my pocket knife and they told me, "Don't reach," and proceeded to search me, while informing me someone was shot. I think about it because it could have been worse. "Will it happen in the future?" Good question. The only short answer is, we will have to see what the future has to offer for me.

Iris Diaz



You try to be friends with them
You want to care about them
Yet they judge you
They lie to you
They use you
They talk about you behind your back
They could care less about you
Their words are sharper than a knife
Their actions are like a bullet to your heart

In your mind you know
What they're thinking
"I don't care about you."

Labib Hussain



I am an artist
That can do anything
I can change any place
I have all body power
This is why I can't control myself

Cleanna Garner



What power do I have?
A power to write well
A power to dream
A power to think well
A power to do my own hair
A power to run fast
A power to make people laugh
A power to do my own nails
A power to make food
A power to get dressed on my own
A power to be nice to people
A power to care for people

Gianna Laurore



I am an artist
That likes to go on walks
And write down everything
I find pretty about nature
I am confident
I will love myself
No matter the damage
I want to have peace

Word. Sound. Power.
in the Classroom

