

Scribbler

APRIL PUSHING AUGUST 2019

ISSUE 99

The Scribbler has reorganized as a Poets House West journal. We are committed to printing a wide variety of energetic writing coming from our youth and from our various communities all the way up to our elders, in all their differing styles.

Editor's Note

Poetry is an art best hued with experience. A number of the poems in this edition of the "Scribbler" have been crafted from the experience of adolescence. High school students from an Oakland public school have written many of the selections in this edition. Their experiences come from the streets, sounds, crowds, houses, homes, and classrooms of Oakland, where the sites of their city color their adolescence with the experience of honest expression.

I am one of their teachers. I am grateful to be a student of students. I learn from them every day.

– Darien Lencl

Inevitable

We live and die
 We wake up each day
 To tell another lie
 We sleep each night
 To close our eyes
 We live to see
 Another life
 That has gone away
 Living
 Death
 The cycle is endless
 Infinite
 Inevitable
 Unavoidable

– Ari Arroyo

All Facts

When they see you progressing
 they're going to hate.
 I grew up in the streets of West Oakland
 Where it ain't safe.
 My hood is a prison,
 I got to escape to leave my city.
 A blessing, just to be free in my city.
 Single parent working 1 job
 really got my moms stressing
 Made some mistakes and there was my lesson.
 Wanna move to L.A
 out where I don't got to tote a weapon.

– Brian Robinson

Drake's Morning (Cold World)

Living from center was always a debate
 Living action being took, mournful being hate
 I passed down as Draco being passed to me
 Cold world with sickness is the only way things fallen on me
 My mindset was hard as I thought what I was finna be
 I told them we was in it as we played her with zee
 I did better as my visual kept its change
 Posted on the stop with rhymes in my brain
 The desire of media; of them remembering my name
 Cold world again as my mom gave it and pushed through
 Open up my hand cause I had to do what I only do
 Payment was key, momma was need, acts was a piece
 Another day goes by and peasant still don't know me
 Why can't I wake up and have a drake morning
 Cause they sad young Latinos can't mess with Black bromies
 They look at you dangerous with a shot of 30 holies
 Paper me down let my lady hold me
 Cause the world don't wanna see you shine with pride
 The desire to kill as you really open your eyes
 Did it for the best may I strive
 As I ten toed up, smile at the sun, blessed to be alive

– Rikelmer Soliz

Darien provided a brief glossary of inner city slang. If you don't grok some of the words these young poets are using, see page 5. – Jean H.

Workshop Schedule

CRAZY CHILD WRITING WORKSHOPS

*Let your creative self write with abandon - based on the tutorial
Let the Crazy Child WRITE! (New World Library, 1998)*

(fee: \$80 or any donation; included in 10-week workshops)

Sunday August 4, 10am to 5pm — Point Richmond

Sunday, September 8 — location tba

ALAMEDA WORKSHOP

(fee: \$25 or any donation)

Frank Bette Center, 1601 Paru Street, Alameda

7 to 9pm, second Thursdays

MARIN WORKSHOP

(fee: \$25 or any donation)

Register at clive@matsonpoet.com for address and dates

7 to 9pm, third Tuesday or Thursday in San Rafael

10-WEEK WORKSHOPS

(fee: \$400 per session)

poetry prose plays nonfiction

Wednesdays 6:30 to 9:30 pm Temescal District, Oakland

Current sessions end October 23 — New sessions start October 30

Fridays 10am to 1pm Lafayette

Current sessions end November 1 — New sessions start November 8

2-BUSY 2-WRITE

(drop-in writing time)

(fee: \$10 or any donation, like healthy cookies)

Tuesdays, 7 to 9 pm

Temescal District, Oakland

THE NOVEL'S ARC

(fee: \$500 for five sessions)

Four novelists read each other's novels and examine how each works as a whole. Two-hour sessions, once a month, devoted to each novel. Currently meeting 7 - 9pm on an upcoming Thursday, date tba. New sessions will start when four authors declare their readiness.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT
matsonpoet.com or phone (510) 508-5149**

POETRY SALOON

(drunk on poetry!)

Second Fridays at 472 44th Street, Oakland
Potluck at 6pm, readings start at 7:30pm

*Bring poems or prose by you or others
to share, or come just to enjoy.*

August 9, September 13

THE SCRIBBLER PREVIOUS-ISSUE FINANCIAL REPORT

Issue 98, 475 printed: \$237.50

433 mailed at a cost of: \$218.47

(including 5 foreign @ \$1.15 each)

Collate, address, seal, and stamp: donated

Mail to submitting writers: Donated

Total expenses: \$455.97

Total income: \$476.00

Net gain: \$20.03

(to be applied to issue No. 100)

DONORS: Jerry Amundson, Robin Ely,
Maria Espinosa, Michele Garside, Mel Krugel,
Deborah Loving, Jayne McPherson, Liza Malm,
R.G. Matson, Dennis Rhodes, Wattie Taylor.



PUBLISHING AND SUBMISSIONS

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

Workshop participants receive the Scribbler for two years or as long as the recipient shows interest. To get on the mailing list, send an email with your name and mailing address to: clive@matsonpoet.com

PLEASE DONATE to keep the publication going.
You can write a check to Clive Matson and mail it to:
THE SCRIBBLER, 472 44th St., Oakland, CA 94609

Poets House West CRAZY CHILD Scribbler

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Identity Poem

Where I'm from:
I'm from a place where mothers are over protective.
Where dads get a little offensive.
A place where sixteen year old girls get pregnant.
I am a Hispanic girl from a place where parents do anything,
So their kids will have a good life.
I'm from a place where parents remind you how difficult life is when you're poor.
So they expect you to do good in life.
From a place where parents put their child to work at a young age.
I am a proud Latina, proud of my roots, and what my parents did for me.
People think bad of us sometimes, people make bad decisions, I agree.
But we're not all the same, some people do good, get grades higher than C's.
I'm from a place where we get offended if someone asks if we're Spanish.
No I'm not Spanish.
I'm Mexican.

– Kaylon Villa

Shadow Key

And I'm always where the sun don't shine
The tears don't show
won't hurt me now
Cause hearts been broke I hate myself,
But I won't show I constantly lose all.
My remorse, and it's ten for the wolf and
Three for the sheep who let by a leopard.
Often, this perception is all I can offer.
Now, I'm in a changing maze
Setting my soul ablaze
couldn't control the place
Where is this going,
gave him one thing he needed.
What is this thing I pleaded
Boy it's the key to even it

– Miguel Ramos

Say What You Want

Everyone's allowed to say what they want.
Don't nobody gotta trip
Can't nobody start some shit
That's completely worthless
Why you tripping off some diss
Don't burry your thought
You just gotta speak up
Don't let no one close you up
Don't worry 'bout them haters
They just wanna see you gone

– Kaylon Villa

Growing Up

Growing up I saw a lot of things
but I never saw hope.
It's like I was made to fail
but I never sold dope
The O.G.'s tell me go to school and play ball
cuz when they was my age
they was in juvenile hall.
Growing up, I had a hoop dream,
got around the hoopers and realized it wasn't for me.
I thought the hood was for me,
'till I seen the niggas.
I loved change before me.
I'm trynna figure a way out,
but if I'm not in the hood
I won't have nuttin' to eat.
Everyone don't wanna see me eat,
so when I eat – I gotta have the heat on me.
Now I realize I gotta have god with me.
It's still a long journey ahead of me.
I know this because god gon' lead the way for me-
on this rode it's a lotta bumps
so you better strap up.

– Darius Goodwin

A World of Class

When someone leaves their country...
What do they expect...
To be welcome with open arms...
Or to be segregated and told no we don't want you here...
People take sides...
People don't know what my people have been through...
But even when it's in open sight...
People don't stand up for us...
We got no rights, we're different, that's what people say about us...
How can we stand up...
In a country that's all against us.
We're not the only ones who do wrong...
But it seems God doesn't forgive us,
If you look different from me or my people.
God would never turn his back on you,
So what's real...
What's to say we don't live in a White Man's world.
In this materialistic world, we won't ever be like you or they...

— Jorge Palma

Loser

The World War
So so tragic
All the people
The ones who fought
The ones who watched
They say that
One say will
Win a war
But that war
Had no winner
That war took
Happiness from people
It took brothers
It took sons
It took fathers
He said that
Wars are bad
And will never happen again
Now look at us.

— John Lee

Lies You Tell

Lies people tell to conceal certain things,
They say it's an act of any human being,
They're small lies, big lies, messed up and whack lies,
In yo face and behind yo back.
There're white lies, black lies, purple lies, and green,
On the radio and on the TV screen,
He has everyone's attention, her name he never mentions,
As he tells us how he had her in the dispositions,
The more he lies, his fee gets higher,
Lies we despise, that's why we tell the truth,
We never compromise,
You lie to your father, you lie to your mother,
You lie to your sister and brother, and worse,
You lie to me,
You lie so much that the truth ain't in you,
I gotta lie myself, just trying to defend you,
You lie all night talking on the phone,
Tellin' lies in the mirror when you're home alone,
I'm fed up with yo bullshit,
Take yo lies on a ship.
Lies you tell, just go to hell....

— Isabella Insalyvanh

I'm for that "Stand Up"

Black power for the hour
March against fear
Martin Luther King
He had a dream
A dream you said
That one day the world would be equal
Malcom X you know
Spoke on how they didn't want
To hear that turn-the-other-cheek stuff
The death of them two
Couldn't be true
Back to Rosa Parks
She sat on the bus not getting up
I stand for my rights
To jail you go

— Armoni Bull

Blink of an Eye

Believe love is never known, discouraging youth's energy
Believe that the power can control you
Love the nation we live in
Is caring too much hard
Never put down a fight
Known for the knowledge I receive
Of many people I see I try not to grieve
moments we share will never compare
Encouraging our kids to be something
Youths do what they see, but never things that they're taught
Energy with good vibes

— Armoni Bull

Living Life

What you know about starting from rock bottom
with only \$15 in your pocket,
shit was crazy mayne,
shout out to all the playas out here hustling to get by.
Ever since I learned the game, it's been life changing.
I was able to be smart enough with my actions to get me where I'm at.
"Living my best Life" I just turned 18
I bought my dream car
a 1989 convertible mustang
that's a project I'm willing to take on for life
Never gon' forget where I come from.
I came from dummy East Oakland 4L

— Sergio Pena

The Nightmare

The world we live in is a nightmare.
The ones that never end.
They will capture us.
They take away our freedom.
They will keep us in rooms like animals.
Never let us reach our goals.
They will separate us from our family.
No matter our age.
Letting us die slowly.
Not checking our health.
I've been walking for 685 hours and 3,372.9km,
Missing my family,
Sick to my stomach,
feeling so much pain.
Wondering how much longer to the U.S.
Starving, wanting food and sip of water.
The pain, getting worse every second.
I began to vomit.
A temperature of 105.
Unexplainable seizures.
My nightmare was just beginning:
I'm a seven year old girl,
Trying to cross the border.
Slowly dying in pain.
I've never been more afraid.
I felt like Gretel lost in the woods,
Thinking the witch was going to save me.
I was wrong.
I found myself in the hospital from my illness,
As I was there, I never recovered.
So I gasped for air, my chest tight-
Then it was over,
my pain, my journey, my future.

— Julianna Huerta

BRIEF GLOSSARY OF INNER CITY SLANG

Bromies - Homies (friends; people you hang out with) combined with bro (brother)

Burry - Bury

Drake - The rapper/singer. This is not slang, but I put it here anyway. When I saw "Drake" I thought of a male duck. --Jean H.

Finna - Going to; fixing to

Holies - Probably a euphemistic conjugation of "holes" that works in the poem to force a rhyme with "bromies."

Mayne - Man as the expression, not the noun. When spoken, it sounds like "main."

Moms - Referring to a mom or mother; singular

O.G. - Short for Original Gangsta(er), a person who's been doing something for a long time, has a lot of experience, or is an elder.

Peasant - Probably meant to describe someone of little power or wealth; someone perceived as being beneath another.

The Others

Oakland, The City, home to tens of thousands:

Everyone has their own stories.
We all come from different places.
Different homes, different beliefs.

Where do we call home,
if this new place we call home
calls us different;
calls the way we think weird?

How do we settle in when our voice is not heard;
when it doesn't exist in the first place?
People blame us for their problems -
when we are just trying to make a living.

This doesn't just happen in the city I was raised in.
This stretches out to the world.
Everyone is always going places,
Lines on a map cause immigration processes.
Everyone does their own part,
but some don't want us to own,
so they keep us apart.

We all have different cultures, but people see us as strange.
We all are new to one another.
My journey here, it was not easy.
We weren't allowed, but we found our way to the city I call home.

My family had it rough:
They had to work for a better wage;
a way for us to feed ourselves;
a roof and four walls.
We had to earn what we have today.
We weren't born into it.

I am glad I have these experiences.
They have made me stronger.
Because of my family,
I have an example to follow this day.

Life doesn't get easier,
it is what you make it.
I have the experience for the challenges ahead of me.
I didn't get weaker, I only got stronger.

— Jorge Palma

Temptation

The beautiful aroma of the irresistible and inevitable power of choice. Knowing that, at one point in everyone's life, they want what they can't have; denying that inevitably, they chase the "impossible" decision. Making every attempt with such precision, even if they have such a distorted life, trying not to think about how badly they're living. The excruciating pain of temptation hurts like a burning flame set upon one's skin, just to have the ability to watch the beautiful flame dance upon their control; hoping that for just a little while, they can enjoy the activity of the forbidden dance of a flame. Temptation cannot be fully recognized, until after it has sprung its trap. It is everything we don't need, but we want. This is temptation.

— Nehemiah Vaughn

Agent Pedagogue's Antithesis Institution

I didn't go into the CIA,
but I am an agent:
Engaging in acts of subversion
teaching students how to tease truth
from between the jail-cell teeth
of a system that treats human flesh, like beef.
I am an agent,
advocating agency for youth
with the urgency of the 59th minute on a doomsday clock;
of the last house standing on a condemned block;
of searching through a treasure-chest of options
after picking its lock.

I am an agent of the institution,
but secretly, I am antithesis
for its solutions.
I situate with enlightenment,
and instigate filaments of thought
to fight against apathy;
to create tools that craft academic apogee-
Taken up by minds
freed from thinking in a box;
freed from latching chains to dreams;
minds that find the freedom of flight
in the fight for truth and empowered sleuths.

I am tuning fork, a soundboard;
a cork-screw opening bottled dreams
that find compass and direction
in a thesis arguing introspection;
I am a conductor, with a chorus of hands
raising to answer a question;
raising in comment, and call, and response.
Hands raising hope for a future
where all are accepted and none are askance.
Hands raising fists like boats
tailored by currents with sails full
from revolution in the air.
Revolution, made from a room of strangers;
strangers who become classmates
as they band together
against those who would ban books,
or build bombs from the palms of profit.

I am a weapon that doesn't commit bodily injury.
I cut into, cut through, cut away.
I cut at the hypocrisy in indifference;
go for the truculent jugular of divisive and dismissive.
I do this in a room with a relative few.
We build blueprints for a new world-view
with camaraderie at its center.
I build a place of learning
from fluorescent lighting and linoleum flooring,
where the flora of young minds
can flourish by blossoming into bodies of fauna-
Who quiet the roar of war
with beauty and dance and Nirvana.

Here I am a teacher;
a student of students;
a transformation in transition,
incognito in the institution-
Stoking the flames of empowered adolescents.
I offer optics that turn on faucets,
which pour forth perspectives
dissected with tools for
choreographing an alchemic dance of dialectics,
allowing students to conjure peace from perplexing.
Education is transformation,
transforming, "I don't care"
into "I know how to find out."
Students are superbly situated to be teachers.
I learn from the wisdom of their years,
call them by their last names,
and hold them dear.

— Darien Lencl
Teacher, Oakland Unified School District

"Hello, Paradise.
Paradise, Goodbye"
readings by Clive Matson

First Saturdays, 7 - 9:30 pm
September 7
November 2
December 7

Epic poem in installments on grief
and what's facing Homo sapiens

Free; donations encouraged.
Open mic.

Frank Bette Center for the Arts
1601 Paru Street, Alameda, CA 94501
510-523-6957

Scribbler Issue Number

100

Reading and Party

We'll send out an email announcing time, date,
and place. Stay tuned!

If you don't already get emails from Clive, send
a message to clive@matsonpoet.com
and ask to get on the list.

THE SCRIBBLER Total expenses: **\$455.97**. Donations: **\$476**
THANK YOU. This could be the 2nd or 3rd issue, out of 99, that has moved from the red into the black.

PLEASE DONATE to keep the publication going.

THE SCRIBBLER
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