Poetry & Music Project

2018-2019
Opera Omaha and Nebraska Writers Collective invited students from Nebraska and Iowa to submit works of poetry on themes of creativity and community.

In Fall 2018, Opera Omaha and Nebraska Writers Collective facilitated writing workshops focused on writing for music. There were 15 writing workshops in October, reaching nearly 300 students. Some of these students, and others, went on to submit their poems to the project.

We received 70 poems submitted by 56 students! The poets are students in grades 3-12 from seven Nebraska Counties: Buffalo, Dodge, Douglas, Gage, Gosper, Lancaster, and Sarpy.

After a blind review, composers Aliya Salmanova and Katie Palka, alumni from the Luna Composition Lab, selected 8 pieces to set to music. The selected poets had the opportunity to participate in a workshop to further develop the piece with the composer and musicians, experiencing the behind-the-scenes process.

The completed works will be performed in concert by Opera Omaha’s Holland Community Opera Fellows as vocalists and local musicians at the Poetry & Music Project Concert as part of ONE Festival.

Opera Omaha’s Poetry & Music Project is produced in partnership with Nebraska Writers Collective and Luna Composition Lab.

This program is funded in part by Humanities Nebraska and the Nebraska Cultural Endowment.
### Poems Selected to Be Set to Music

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SUNSHINE MASK: A Visual Art Outlook

By: Emily Burck

Close your eyes
Picture a little girl standing in a forest
There are trees surrounding her in every direction
Listen for a river
Do you hear it
Make it run through the trees
Did you do it
Now picture the tree line with the river going to the end
Did you draw it
See a never ending field of flowers at the end
Walk up to it
Feel the calm and soothing breeze as it goes through your hair
See the texture of the flower
Examine closely
Conjure a happy thought
Now look up at the sky
See the color changes
Mask over all of your dark thoughts
Just close your eyes for a moment
And let the light shine through
Snow
By: Zachary Evans

As the Fresh powder blankets the ground
    and the air crispens
children peering out the window
    all run out, out the doors, out the houses, out into the snow
As the Snow glistens and the air gets cold
(the children have joy)
Ocean
By: Audrenna Hicks

The ocean is a quiet place,
The calmest place to let it flow
The tears we cry,
The pain we share
The fantastic new wet wonders,
The ocean is the quiet place,
Do you have commotion?
Well that's ok!
There's a safe place for your commotion
And it's called the ocean
Have a dream you want to get rid of?
Go for a journey
And join the tide,
Let your dream go
Let it flow,
Along the ocean waves
Once its gone you're good to go
To the ocean
What a quiet flow.
I realized this one night, sitting in my backyard around a campfire.

I imagine myself here and there.

Maybe it wasn’t just the actual flames in front of my eyes slowly burning out, but the emotions

Sizzling away inside as well.

Dispersing around me, I feel the smoke.

I once felt this warmth.

Wanting a better future, wanting to feel that fury of passion forever.

It was burning in my lungs as if a firework exploded inside me.

I want to love my life, not just live it.

The hopes, the dreams.

Feeding the flames with more desires and wants, will it lead to my longing destination?

Will fear the unknown destroy the blazing flames?

The need for validation and reassurance that the future can’t give me.

No flame burns forever.
My Darkness Shines

By: Nathaniel Kielian

In these words I write, I see a growing trend
A constant, building concept in the works I have penned
The joy simply doesn’t flow
And the darkness, ever fluid
Night’s words are ever brighter
Than day’s old message renewèd
This light feels all too lofty and pure
The black’s soft shadow reaching to reassure
To the depths of my being, the perfection seems fake
Away with this fallacy, and from my slumber wake
This is my life, where nothing is set in stone
And the darkness in my heart has a light of its own
But I am not alone in this sentiment, of this I know
For if in the face of light,

Would not your heart cast a shadow?
Not Your Average Heart
By: Nathaniel Kielian

In a world of athletic, muscled men
It’s hard being a boy who wields only a pen
In a world where men are strong with hearts of stone It’s hard being a boy who’s scared of being alone
In a world where a man’s feelings are rarely ever shared It’s hard being the boy who wanted to tell you he cared In a world where men are one big animalistic race
It’s hard being a boy who respects you and your space
In a world where men are tough enough to handle the heat It’s hard being a boy who loves everyone he meets
In a world where in love and war, all is fair
It’s hard being the boy who really does care
Thunder
By: Aislinn Miller

Thunder
I lay silent in my bed watching the beautiful night sky
I hear a loud CRACK and then I start to fly
I’m flying I’m flying
I hear another CRACK then I awake
It was all just a dream
My Music Medication
By: Chloe Urugutia

I breathe music like air going to my chest
Oh how it takes me from my worst to my best
We all have days where our faces grow longer
But music is the healing making us stronger

It’s as if a symphony illuminates my mind
Something so soothing, to the brain so kind
And when your soul feels numb to all the pain
A melody can cleanse you like the morning rain

Maybe it’s the tune that stays forever in a couple’s eyes
For even when they’re old and gray their love song never dies
It’s the humming of a mother to her new baby miracle
As joy floods her eyes and a tear begins to trickle

From chills you get upon hearing that first beat
To the way the rhythm has you up on your feet
Maybe it’s the way the lyrics seem to dry your tears
For pieces of a broken heart as your makeup smears

And when the words fail music speaks for me
As I look around and my demons seem to flee
Like the music notes weaved into my DNA
Oh how music gets me through each day
Oof attire cryptographs succ boi

By: Natalia Aquallo

Schools are always talking about dress codes whether good or bad. They always seem to talk about “being true to yourself” or “expressing yourself”, and that’s what really gets me mad.

But when it comes to dress codes it’s like they’re shutting down all of your creativity. Most schools make students miss out on education simply because of what she/he is wearing. They imply their clothing will cause a distraction and won’t allow their peers to learn but a fraction of their education.

But did I mention the main reasons are: bad content, showing too much skin, inappropriate language, colored hair, or attracting too much attention.

Let’s be honest:

When was the last time you saw a male get pulled out of class only to find out he got dress-coded? Yet, how many times has a female been subjected to this injustice? My male peers aren’t ever reprimanded for their inappropriate fashion; we females would have imploded, if we were the girl who was just sitting next to me before she was called down, trust us.

I can say I’ve only experienced this one time, but I can say that I can’t wear 2 shirts and 1 hoodie which is worth a pretty dime.
of clothing that my parents worked hard for which tbh it sounds like a crime.

Now I know what say a fool:

“Well you can still wear it, just not to school.”

Well obviously, but imagine,

you just bought some lit new fashion,

and you’re excited to wear it to school,

and then you find out you’re not allowed to look cool.

You would probably feel crushed or heartbroken,

all that money that was worked SO hard for, so you can be outspoken.

Now some might argue, “It’s less distraction for students

so they can concentrate on their studies and not be ‘badly influenced’”

But let’s be real,

Is it a big deal?

Who’s going to stare at you

and make you feel blue

JUST because your hair is colorful

or your shoulders are seeable

or because your shirt has Tupac Shakur?

That’s right. No One. So let’s get rid of these dumb procedures!
The Omaha Zoo is the Best Place for Me

*By: Mohammad Adel Khair Allah*

The desert dome is where the big animals roam,
The lions home is in the desert dome,
We grab some sand in our hand on the desert dome land,

The fishes home is in the aquarium zone,
The fish made a swish, the fish got in a fight and got a bite,
The fish died and the zookeepers sighed,

The rattle snake’s home is in the African zone,
The rattle snake rattles and shakes,
The rattle snake gathers and takes prey.

I like to go to the Omaha zoo because I like to see my favorite animals
Dancing Gets Me Through the Day
By: Salsabiel Khair Allah

I always just dance.
Sometimes, I dance like a chicken, which is weird, I guess.
Scientists say that dancing is an exercise, so I am exercising at the same time.
I always thought my dances were simple,
but when other people see it, they can't even do it.
Dancing is my happiness like the color of my soul.
It's like I just could fly on my own out of the atmosphere.
It lifts my spirits, and I say to myself, “I can do better next time.”
When I twirl, I feel myself flying like a leaf swaying in the wind.
I feel my tutu go up.
I head people clapping and cheering.
I close my eyes and see myself in a different planet dancing on my own.
The First Day
By: Salah Aldyn Khair Allah

I walked off the airplane through the metal like hallway into the bright light
People spoke a language I could not comprehend,
That was my first thought about Omaha.

I finally saw a familiar face,
My dad!
He led me to a car.
During the ride home, I saw more cars than I had seen in my whole entire life at one time,
That was the first day for me in Omaha
My new home, with new friends and new challenges to face.
In Syria
Fear lurks in the air,
Wild dogs try to bite you, Adults try to kidnap you,
Sellers try to cheat prices,
Soldiers shoot you for no reason,
And bombs destroy buildings every night,
But Syria isn't all bad,
I have two big families and friends that are honest and will always back me up,
That's what it was like back in Syria.

Omaha has beautiful springs with green, pink, and red leaved trees,
With cold mornings and warm afternoons,
Hot summers that make you want to swim,
Freezing winters that make you want to cuddle in a blanket drinking hot chocolate,
And libraries where you can read books and enjoy them,
Omaha welcomes everyone that comes to it by its kind and friendly people that always help.

Omaha is my new home.
Untitled

By: Kelly Arellano

From the morning to night
You are my star that keeps shining down on me
From now and forever
Our friendship bond will keep getting
Better and better
everyday.
Making wishes from night to morning
That our friendship would last
forever.
Fractals
By: Brandon Barajas

I am not an artist I am not a poet
I am however not oblivious
to the art that surrounds my ever still life
Summer teased me
with what I had wanted to grow with
But I could not heed the warning
the cycle reminded me of
Which was the coming of art into life
Dying leaves fall from trees
Leaving behind ancient relics of a time that once existed in
my mind
The snow that melts away mistakes never arrived
I’m left behind only to exude regret
The thought still lingered though I knew I would
see her again
Untitled
By: Jesus Benitez Jr.

23rd street is a place of memories
Evenings glittering like heaven
Kids outside riding on their bikes
Snails and snakes killed by a violent boy
like the Spaniards killing hundreds of native people
from one side to the other
the tanned sidewalks cracked and hard
just like any other
cries of the young boys fighting
Dogs barking in the large neighborhood
I wish that those days would come back
Saturdays were the perfect days in 23rd street
Untitled
By: Emma Berry

I’m tired of all this drama
I feel like I can’t be there for my dad
Without hurting my mama
I live my day on eggshells, getting mad
This hurt is just causing so much trauma
Remembering what I once had is making me sad
I feel like I’m at the end, with a period but I’m just at a comma

In the beginning of their divorce
I felt like we were on the right course
Now I feel like being happy is enforced
And if you’re sad all anyone feels is remorse

Now that we’re towards the end,
I try to numb the pain
But it’s embedded like a stain
Addictive habits but nothing has really changed

Happiness is hiding
It feels like my past is rewinding
In search of a relationship
But I need to skip on that dependency
Boys only want one thing these days
Need to get happiness from another source
Or make them happy with sexual-intercourse
And if you don’t give them that
They cheat and don’t take ownership
Then you’re forced into one huge game of battleship

Now is this home?
Is this our reality?
Are we just enclosed in one big dome?
Is this just a lesson to shape our mentality?
In search of a specific zone?
Is the world really filled with all this brutality?
Are our futures seriously decided by a phone?
Is that really the formality?
In the end are each of us just our own drone?
Suicide
By: Savanna Binnick

One two three
They don’t know what they mean to me
They don’t want to be here
We don’t want them to leave
They just want to be pain free
They want to find a way out
Everyone says there’s help
Yet nobody seeks it
Nobody knows how they feel
How many people do we have to lose
Til we realize how they truly feel
Til we find them the help they need
A help they seek
How do we make them see
How much they really mean
To me
To their family
To their community
The community has struggled
Losing many people
Losing faith that it will rise
That it will become stronger
Not weaker
We need to build this community
Build the people in it
Build the people’s mental health
When this finally happens
The community will strive
And the people will be happy at last
He was cold, hungry, sad
Wandered the streets alone
Wondering if anyone was looking for him
Asking people where he was
Looks of disgust left and right
Realizing he's not the same color
He didn't match
The milk
Or caramel
Or cornstarch
Didn't mix in the boiling pot
Missed the love everyone gave
He simply missed home.
Light

By: Morgan Burenheide

Lights have many meanings in life and they are used every second of every day.

It comes in many different colors and can provide incredible art for the naked eye.

As we come into this world, our eyes are very sensitive to light and we can not distinguish where it comes from. As we grow light begins to have a meaning it may protect us from the dark shadows of the night or be a friend on the loneliest days.

As a light shines on the walls of a young child's room they drift off into the silence of the night. Many cheer in the bleachers stacked high on the side of the fresh green field. The stadium lights flicker and the crowd roars as the home team enters the stadium.

The dreams of the athletes come true under the Friday Night Lights.

The moon shines brighter than any star in the sky. It lights up my life.

The lights become dimmer as we grow old but the memories flood back as the lights flicker on each day.

Our eyes fill with a bright white light as we say our final goodbyes.

Lights guide us through each phase of life and have many different meanings in our lives.

The one aspect that will never change is that a light will always shine somewhere.
No one in sight
silent as can be
Everyone is asleep
Except for me
I hear a sound I start to fear that something bad is almost near
I try my hardest not to worry and grab my flashlight in a hurry
My hands are shaking as I grab the door I do my best to fear no more
I grasp the flashlight and turn it on trying to see what lies beyond
The more I walked the louder it got I didn't think it would ever stop
I got to the living room and was filled with relief, for it was only my dog, who was fast asleep.
Smile
By: Rianna Chaney

There are days I feel like I am living in a dream... no a nightmare. Some days it feels like life is unfair, and I try and I try to make a difference but no one seems to care. Sometimes it feels like hate fills the air wrapping around me to a point I can't bare. But then I find refuge in a pen and paper. I start to write down numbers and my pain seems to disappear like vapor. 1,2,3...
You were made perfectly. 4,5,6...
Break your barriers brick by brick 7,8,9...
Don't waste your time on there petty crime against your mind. For you are kind, and if you cry keep your head held high. Then say goodbye to their hostile way that makes the world look so grey. For at the end of the day you will smile because it will be okay.
Fear

By: Caydyn Corter

Fear is different for everyone.

Fear of snakes, spiders, anything.

I fear many things, water, bugs, many more.

Fear can be a toxin in your life, degrading and destroying your entire life

Everything hinges on fear and whether or not you are afraid.

Fear is not unstoppable, though.

Fear can be conquered by facing your fears
Untitled

By: Justin Crouse

Roses are red violets are blue and I like you and you are nice like the sky and the moon, your eyes are round like the star that twinkle above the sky they glow night and day and when I look at them they sparkle like sparklers for the 4th of July, When u smile you brighten up my day and make me happy every day,
**Untitled 1**  
*By: Matthea Dalton*

You Fool,  
Life is too short,  
Similarity is too bland,  
To not seek the flame burning in your soul,  
Remember  
Only are the cowards frightful of their own  
Bravery

**Untitled 2**  
*By: Matthea Dalton*

I am grateful.  
Grateful for all the recreants who highlight all the difficulties in bravery.  
Grateful for the selfish who make all the benevolent acts seem unbearable to carry out.  
Grateful for all the arid-eyed people who blend in so that some may stand out.  
Grateful for all the people who burn their own flame.  
I mean, after all,  
Doesn’t mine burn even brighter now?  
And for the I am very grateful.  
Thank You.
There was a time when I was alone
No one I had so I was on my own
But there was a day
I needed a home
So I prayed and I said
You are the way
You are the truth

And with your help I can
Make it through
The lonely times
The mad times

And with your help
I can make it through
I wish you were here
Oh I wish you were
To comfort me through through the hard times
I miss you
I miss you
and I wish that you were here
and I wish you were here.
Often times, we see each others lives through a lens.

This particular lens contorts and disfigures the picture.

We never really can understand how others feel.

People experience different emotions, some of those being incomprehensible.

With this lens held up, acting as spectacles, things may seem okay, yet,

if you were to put yourself in their shoes, you may disagree.

See, this lens contorts and disfigures the picture, creates an almost tilted viewpoint,

possibly one where the world seems almost upside-down, but not quite.

Because in a way, we’re all similar, and that is beautiful.
Art is a pretty open term
It’s a matter of opinion
To each and every person
Pencils write the words of the future
Brushes paint the stories of the past
But people, people make that art
To say a message, to show a feeling
To write a novel, to paint a portrait
Creativity drives us
And all these emotions
Circle around, begging to be set free.
Art is a medium that allows expression to be unbound
No restraints, no ropes to hold you back from those ideas
That drive you, that motivate you, to create.
Art is what you make of it
And what we make, is art
Untiled 1
By: Aidan Eberspacher

Fall leaves…
Laying on the ground

Fell from the tree…
The beautiful colors

Vary from a bright orange
To a dark yellow

Kids jumping into great big leaf piles
Pumpkin Patches

Apple orchards
Carving Pumpkins

The smell of pumpkin spice in the air
Pumpkin pie

Christmas will be here
Snow and slush

Light and ornaments
Winter break

Staying up late
Sleeping till noon

Hot Chocolate
Untitled 2
*By: Aidan Eberspacher*

Summertime Freetime
Stay up all night
Wait to get up when the sun is bright
Can’t wait to go swimming biking or just lay around all day Hello I hear my friend say
Tank tops and shorts
Fall of your bike the scrape really hurts go to visit your family in another town The dark silhouette of the moon Staying up late to see the stars
Your cold spoon full of ice cream Flows down your throat like a cold stream Happy camper…
The sign you see as you pull into the campsite
Family sit around the fire
Roasting marshmallows and hot dogs
Hear the sound of an owl
Hear the howl of a wolf off in the distance August 20th 8:00 the start of school has arrived Standardized tests, Pop quizzes, the drama between your friends Don’t you just wish that it was still summertime...
The Sun
By: Zachary Evans

Big ball in the sky
there to keep us warm and cozy, toasty
never again shall we be cold
the Sun will keep us safe
safe from harm
Free to love
Its cozy toasty
but if the ball was to go away
we would all it would be
the end
Just the end.

The rising flames.
the flames spread rapidly
they take lives
they takeaway families
they tear humanity apart
slowly ripping at all the things they call home
but they shall not stop
they will keep going
destroying anything in their path
silence
I am lost
By: Hazel Marie Goeden

I Am Lost
I wonder if I will find my way out
I fear I will never see my friends again
I touch the rough bark of the trees surrounding me I want to get out

I Am Lost
I see no sunlight, for the trees are blocking it I try to yell for help, but no one listens
I hear my voice echoing in the mountains I feel alone and unwanted

I Am Lost
I dream I am at home in the arms of my parents I hope I will not die alone in these woods
I pretend I am with my family I say I am not scared, but I am I

Am Lost
That’s who I am

By: Hazel Marie Goeden

Who am I
I am a hard-core Harry Potter fan who hasn’t even read all the books
I am a girl who has The Complete Works of Edgar Allen Poe stashed in her locker at all times
I am a vegetable person, I know, I’m sorry
An extrovert who likes being alone
A Louis Armstrong admirer who gave up on trumpet after one year
A laundry isle smeller
A procrastinator
I am a singer who tries to sing all the genres, but just can’t get country down
I’m a person just like 7.6 billion other people in the world
Except I’m not
I’m me
Who am I
I am a girl who sometimes scares herself looking in the mirror
I am a theater person who just happens to love the spotlight
I am an artist who hates coloring
A person who cried while watching Elf
A nervous nail chipper
A coffee lover who can’t drink it dark
A dog person
I am one of the few people who got the pleasure of having two back surgeries
I’m a person just like 7.6 billion other people in the world
Except I’m not
I’m me
One of a kind
Writing

By: Kenia Gutierrez Perez

If I show you this you'll just see it as something to write
When in reality I'm trying to fight
Win this situation and make it alright
Get this pain out and move on with my life
They say all good things come to an end
And if this was one of them just know my love was not pretend
This vibe seems like its fading away
I want to save it now before it's too late
Don't know if there's someone I'm steady missing
Maybe it's me and I can't stop the reminiscing
Like if I call their phone will they sit there and listen
We stay building chambers just call it life in prison
Perfect kodak moment where we could paint the picture
But y'all aren't around no more I hope one day it hit you
So I had to boss my life up let them know I have a voice
If I ain't speak up tell me who gone make the noise
They get what I'm saying but they still don't get the point
They keep on trying to break me like I haven't been destroyed
No matter the pain I'll always be cool
No matter the obstacles I'll do what I do
Always felt so small but trust me I done grew
All those minds I've changed and all those minds I blew
Pan was all I saw so ima keep it true
I usually write about things that go on with me
I guess don't now cause I'm living happily
It's not even that I'm just running free
I usually write about the things that would make me hurt
Or about the drama and people who did me dirt
But I don't know more so tell me how that works
Those are examples of what writing does to me
It helps me balance life and helps me breathe
The Lake

By: Cole Hazen

The SUN

Stretching over the horizon above the TREES
Sparkling on the glistening LAKE
The sound of the grace DUCKS flapping across the settled water Fish
jumping out of the grand bay
The squirrels running across the green soft grass While my
dog is chasing after them
And having a blast

We all are out tubing and Pushing each other
Trying to stay on together
Now my mom’s calling for us
To have some dinner and some dessert
Now Dad pulls in boat But before we get to land
We all jump off and have a race To see who can swim the fastest

While we eat PIZZA, smokeys, and pie There is a surprise waiting outside
We munch and we munch on the food And it really changes our stomachs mood
Then my mom brings out the pie
After it is all gone we sit and all at once “sigh” As we go back out on this glorious day
To our surprise it is night now
Our jaws drop it is so beautiful the sky in front of us The stars are gleaming very bright
We all WISH we could play all night

But wait we can we all gather around and suggest our thoughts of what to do Tag hide
and seek football wiffle ball all these ideas
Wiffle ball it is
We split into 2 teams
The other team is up to bat first they hit them pretty far At the end of the game we have won
Even though they hit more homerruns
At the end of the day it is all fun in the sun
We all head home and this poem is done
Ocean Tide
By: Audrenna Hicks

The ocean tide,
Its where to hide when you get scared
The ocean tide is where to go
When you ever get sad
A thing to say
When you’re not in a good mood
Is take me to the oceans tide,
If you get there and don’t know what to do
Call its name
Ocean blue,
Ocean tide
Where do you hide?
Do you hide from me?
Are you gone for good?
Please come back,
I’m letting go.
The Value of You  
*By: Mackenzie Higgins*

I never realized how much I missed you  
Until you were no more  
Each night I dream you are here  
You helped me get through hard times You  
were my person  
The one I could rely on through the good and the bad  

Never did I realize how much I needed you around Until I  
did not have anyone who understood me  
To guide me  
To listen to me  

I never realized how much I missed you  
Until you were no more  
There are no amount of words to describe the appreciation I have for you How  
much I love you  
How much I need you  

Never did I think you would leave so soon Never  
did I think you would be gone  

Never did I think I would have to go on without you in my life My only  
hope is that you are doing happy wherever you are
Music

By: Maddy Hill

Sadness approaches
Happiness approaches
Songs run through my head
Sadness changes to happiness
Happiness changes to sadness
Emotions run through my body turning me into exhaustion

Gloomy, Melancholy forget about things around it's a time to change your feelings
Alone time Thoughts
Sadness approaches
Fremont means a lot to me it’s my home town! I see it as a small little town in Nebraska but also a welcoming place to be. May comes around and there is the carnival by the mall, Concession stands for fireworks every June/July all over.

Fremont is challenging because there is a lot of things to do here in Fremont. Ice skating, Swimming, and Trampoline park. No matter the weather there is something to do. It is weird that the weather can change at anytime. Let’s say the 12th of September is super hot, then the 13th comes and it’s now snowing and freezing.

All the houses are cozy and you feel at home just walking through the doorway. Over all it really is a nice place to be or just look at. The sun rises and sunsets are pretty amazing to watch!
Fear

By: Jordan Houston

The thing about fear is that it helps keeps away from harmful things. When we see something we fear our brain automatically tells us that we need to turn around and get away. It impacts to a certain degree that people may never do what they love due to fear. Finally, if we didn’t have any fears then the world would be a different place. We could do what we love without fearing anything, even death.
Untitled
By: Madalynn Ideus

Fall is the season where you go outside
And you feel the crisp morning air
Then you take a step on the side
You walk through the forest full of trees and air
but keep going
You see the trees of green and the leaves of orange and yellow
Then stopping
You stop to say hello to a friendly creature
You laugh and you play in the fall leaves
You never thought a creature would have such a friendly feature
Then you play till the sun sets you feel like the leaves
Could be your best friend
You had a lot of fun today you feel like coming another day
But you wish it would never end
So you come out and say
Do have a place to stay
This creature didn’t talk all day so there is no way it would say anything
So you say
Nevermind I didn’t expect you to say something
Then the creature stands up and says come with me
Being stunned you stand up
It takes you to a den, you like me
It lifts you up to the top bunk
And the night ends
THE END
The season change
By: Grant Kiefer

Winter is in the year
And we think of penguins and reindeer. It's
at the beginning and end
Almost like a time bend. There's
not many places to go,
But you can still play in the snow.

Now spring is here
And animals are near.
Birds will sing
And bicycles ding. It's
warming up
And there's a cold drink in your cup
Now there is Summer
And that's not a bummer.
Kids are out of school,
And go swimming to keep cool. Summer is
fun,
And you can go run.

Now here is fall,
Come one come all.
Now there is school,
So no more pool.
It is time to be scary,
You can have a costume
Scaly or hairy.
It is cooling down
In your thankful city or town

Now you are back at the start, The
season when snow is the heart.
I was born in Fremont Nebraska… I don’t know why. It always smells bad. The town is kinda small. We do have the biggest YMCA … but the worst probably inside. I like to golf and swim at the club which is nice but it still smells bad though. We have one trampoline park which is ok. I like to go to Omaha to watch movies, shop, and also to eat. WHY DO OUR SPORTS SUCK! I mean c’mon we are in this league for football and you’re supposed to split the teams evenly but there’s an Elkhorn team who shuts us out and one that is a good game but we still loose and one we destroy. And it’s exactly the same for Millard. We are ok at basketball but still we verse great, good, and terrible teams in sports from all of Omaha. We have what 11 fast food restaurants not including two more Subways and one more Burger King and Runza. I’m sure a town of about 25,000 doesn’t need 11 fast food restaurants with three that have more than one. I really want to move to Omaha. Fremont Sucks.
Rhyme
By: Nathan Kudrna

Gallons of sweat down my neck,
get too close and you might get decked and
then it's whoever's next.

I'm not here to make friends I'm just here to write a poem. They s

aid it could rhyme…

I stopped listening and made it rhyme it took me time
but it seems just fine this competition is mine.

Halloween is coming up an I don't know what to wear, maybe a crow or a
doe
or a Progressive agent named Flo.

You don't even know what I'm capable of all. These poems are too slow talking about nature
and love and joy we should be talking about sports, and the poor and the hate in this country.

But back to the Rhyming oh
man great timing.
There ain't no perfect lining in this world and I'm not whining but

am am telling the truth.

This poem is well designed but I'm not done yet. Y'all should be mining for the truth in these
forms of music/writing.

You are stalling and I
am brawling
for this competition because I don't quit until there is not one bit of hope left.

This probably won't be a song because it's long and not really for opera. I hope this won't stop
you because I am working hard for this.
Home
By: Yesennia Lopez

Home is a place where you can feel loved and cared for,
A place where you don’t have any worries,
A place to feel safe and warm,
A place to spend time with your loved ones,
But sometimes things don’t go as planned…
And those loved one have to leave…
Forever...

Life
By: Yesennia Lopez

Life is like a game,
You can be winning or losing,
You can choose your team members,
And also choose/make your own decisions
that will reflect on you in the future.
Untitled

By: Manuel Macias-Mendez

Born left but raised right, from humanity we all are from,
We all come to think of ourselves overnight, that what will we become, Will we grow up insane, or will we
grow up to be an afterimage,
But me the wonderful me, they always wanted me to be, is their own creative destruction, The plot they put
in my head, that wonderful me,
All this hanging back, all these infinite possibilities, that they want me to grasp,
Yet after all this, I just don't care,
The wonderful me they push me to be, is just an unreal standard,
I'm spellbound to face all these lies, but it's alright,
Even though their hanging on tight,
That wonderful me that they want me to be, is one that I don't care for, I’ll throw it all away just, so I can
face my fears,
For the love of god, my heavy mind will run abroad, My dangerous mind will be mine,
Yet I don’t care, it’ll all come crashing down,
All that building up to, this ending just wrong,
Born right raised left, from humanity or lives will be drawn,
Still I don’t care,
Untitled
By: Yanelly Martinez

Music that special song
The one that gets me through the day.
The one that calms my stress.
I don’t want to imagine how life would be without the music.
How would I feel, would I feel the same way?
I walk the halls, don’t worry about what’s happening around me.
Can’t seem to hear people’s voices.
I just stand in different world with this art,
Just focusing on that and only that.
It just can’t be any song, it has to be the ones I love.
The ones that have on my playlist.
The ones that I can listen to daily.
The ones that define me and only me.
Lost
*By: Alexis McCrimmon*

Where am I? How did I get here?
I come out of the darkness, only for a second,
As the sound of knocking and yelling reaches my ears
As the man at the window asks me if I’m hurt,
I don’t understand why, but I can’t utter a word
The only thing I can do is shake my head yes,
As I’m sucked back into the world of unconsciousness
I awaken again with needles in my arms and bruises covering my body
When I opened my eyes my mother started to cry as she tells me she loves me
As the days passed after my poor mother asks herself why
As her only daughter sits in the corner with tears in her eyes
I’m sorry mother, I must apologize, for this life is not one I wish to live
Hopefully one day you’ll learn to forgive
Your little girl is lost
Advice From a Provincial

By: Alexis McCrimmon

You see the flat grounds as boring
That nothing about this place is alluring
You think it isn’t worth the time
To me, these lands are sublime
You must go beyond what you believe
Take some time and walk through the leaves
Have you ever seen the magic of them going from brown to green?
The plants are growing
The water is flowing
The birds are flying
The sky is crying
Let the wind run through your hair
As the smell of flowers fills the air
The ground crunching beneath your feet
The homely comfort of the summer heat
These are the lands of the first homestead
Don’t let the scenery go over your head
**Untitled**  
*By: Brynne McDermott*

It's today, my special day!  
shopping, swimming and all my favorite things.  

It's my day.  
It's for me.  

Pick a place any place where will I pick for all?  
the best part of the day,  
CAKE!!!  
It's my day.  
It's for me.

---

**Untitled**  
*By: Brynne McDermott*

Spin, jump, twist. Tur.... BOOM, CRASH  
Spin, jump, twist, turn, leap.  

Finally  

Finally  
FINALLY!  
You're ready.  

For the day you will go on stage and show everyone  
YOU CAN  
Dance.
Belonging. What is belonging? Belonging to me is feeling safe and welcome somewhere. I believe I belong in several things and places. Something I belong in is the art community. From the first time I grasped onto the drawing pencil I knew I belonged. The community also accepts me. What I mean by a place is a place. A community can be diverse or not be diverse at all. The community accepts you with all your faults and flaws. In my community there is a lot diversity in where you’re from or of what type of art you do. This is why I love my community. I wouldn’t give it up for the world. It is where I feel safe and home. It is my world.
Fall
By: Aislinn Miller

Fall
Fall is my season Fall is my all
Magical, sweet, cinnamon, apples, pumpkins
Fall is just my all

Christmas
By: Aislinn Miller

Christmas
Food, food, food galore
The stocking’s fell on the floor
This Christmas is just a mess
Christmas is just always blessed
Untitled
By: Kaden Murray

People are like the sky.
Some are blue, some are shy.
They are like snowflakes that come in all different shapes and sizes.
People are fluffy like clouds or thin like lightning bolts.
Their words even blow like the wind.
Their tempers can be a storm that blows up out of nowhere stir up a tornado.
Some even say hello.
Others smile and make you feel good for miles.
Some are shining stars.
The sun will warm a person’s heart and make you feel good inside.
Rain is like tears falling from their face.
The sky is full of life just like a person’s life.
No matter how you feel there is always a rainbow on the other side.
The sky’s the limit.
Home didn’t always feel like home to me. My sisters and I had a toxic figure in our lives for years. It drank. It yelled. It claimed to love us but would hardly look at us. I didn’t like going home to see beer cans and broken chairs. My house didn’t feel like home the way it used to be. These memories are just the past. Now it has left. It only comes around every once in a while. Now home feels safe and warm. Home welcomes me now. Home has changed for the better and so have I.
I’m Sorry, Mom
By: Austin Owen

I’m sorry mom
I wish
I could make you better
I wish
you weren’t sick
I wish
it was a bad dream
it would wash away
I can’t wait till you come home
I’m sorry how they treated you
at that hospital
We have shared more tears than laughter
in the past two months
But you’re getting better
day by day
It won’t be long till you get home
Happy again with me and Marty
**Untitled**  
*By: Erin Plessel*

Home to me is, happy faces shining brightly in the sunsets.  
The warmest hearts by a fire.  
My home is you.  
Looking into your stained glass irises, and feeling warmth in my heart and soul.  
When I see you, I always want more.  
Like the sensation you feel when you smell your mother making your favorite meal or when you laugh so hard your cheeks ache.  
Knowing you has been my privilege.  
Being in love with you, has been my greatest adventure.  
I know your heart better than my own.  
Knowing you so well, just by your laugh.  
I know.  
Knowing you so well, just by that one look  
I know.  
Knowing you so well, just by the way your step sounds.  
I know.  
Knowing you so well, like the back of my own hand.  
I know, that I love you with all my heart.  
You burn vividly in my mind, like a wildfire burning constantly along the countryside.  
Your aroma makes me wish it was a candle I could burn when you’re not around me.  
My home is you.  
The sound of your voice is like a calming melody, pulling me out of depression’s deep and cold waters.  
The image of you smiling is a tattoo on my mind.  
I know that I love you,  
My home is you.
Better Off  
*By: Brianna Prall*

I can't pretend to be someone I'm not  
This is how people start to rot  
I once was lost but now I've been found  
What if it is only love keeping me around  
There were so many days that I was happy  
Now everything just feels crappy  
I want to feel alive and free  
And for some reason that just can't be  
I want you to know that I care  
But now I am left feeling bare  
Love will make you do crazy things  
In the end the attention is all that clings  
I have finally realized that I am better off without him  
Right now life might seem dim  
But I have to remember to hold my head high  
And wave those sad feelings goodbye.
My Stand
By: Katie Proskovec

I know, I know
Phones are banned
Now it is my turn
Now it is my turn
...
The first amendment states
I can protest peacefully
It says I can do it
Legally
...
I want to change
The no cell phone rule
We should be able
To have our phones at school
...
You may no want to
Agree with me
But after reading this
You will agree with me, and we
...
I know my school My
peers are kind
There would be no bad things
Online from their mind
...
It's crazy how kids get in trouble
For pulling their phone out
But then don't get in trouble
With what they wear out
...
Teachers always tell students
To express who they are
We can't do that
We can't show people our avatar
...
You see, we need our phones
To express who we are
We need our phones out
To become a star ...

Our phones make us
Creative, smart, strong, and fearless
We become more of who we are
This is my atlas
...
We use our phones
On the bus
The people with students
Give us trust
...
We got our phones banned
Last semester, last year
Give us our phones back
It is crystal clear
...
The Outstanding You!
By: Gabriel Reyes

From a distance
I’m just like the rest
With my skin being a brown complex
And my hair anything but different
My height is the only thing that gives me away
I can see past the crowds, no pun needed
For the blood I’m bleeding goes farther down to this land than the roots of the
green giants that stand watch
Giving us our next breath
As my veins are the rivers and there my friends are the green giants giving letting me live
For my blood is red, just like everyone else
The thing makes me different is me being Native.

Those feather head, redskins that went almost extinct long ago
The people that had a price their own scalp
There’s a lot more stuff that went down
More than I ever want to know
But with each scar my elders endured, every tear, every lie.
I bear all of those like a jacket of pride.
Music
By: Emersen Riessen

Music
Sad, happy, mad…. All these feelings
Get me through the day - powerful!
Lucky, satisfied, calming….i will never let it go.
People make fun, well i am done it will go on with me in my heart and soul
Feeling down as the day goes round
Turn to my music and listen to the sound it is like the pain in my side the betting in my heart it can’t go away and that’s ok
Never give up never letting go the deed is done so just go
I will leave if you will not i will carry on as long as the music won’t stop
Now you can leave i will to we’ll take this song both me and you
We can turn when we fell lost we look at this song and the pain will stop
It will not fail and neither will you it’s like a brain it helps you think
It’s like a drug you can’t stop
But if or when it fails you can’t think it’s ever the only thing you can turn to
I’m right here for you to turn when you feel like giving up just think of us we fit like a puzzle My time is up but you’ll still go never stop keep your train going
No matter what gets in your way keep going.
Being different
By: Dalila Rios-Mendez

I am different
In my family
But I am unique in my own way.
I get judged in my home from my sexuality but that doesn't make me or my life any different.
I am just an average teen girl
Whose still in high school for the fifth time.
Being different in my family is hard because I get insulted, judged and get dirty looks
In school, no one notices but I have learning problems. I get extra help or when I am doing a project, I get extensions to get the project done.
I am different
In my family.
But I am unique in my own way.
I am proud from who I am.
I won't care if someone insults me or call me names or phrases that are cruel and hurting.
I wouldn't care, why?
Because it ain't worth it.
I am different.
Untitled
By: Layla Siskow

I truly am the outstanding me
I'll tell you why so you can see
I'm creative and artistic
I'm sometimes optimistic
I'd tell you all about me
But you wouldn't quite see
The little things are mystic
And can be quite cryptic
The thing about me
Is that sometimes I see
What makes others truly unique
Maybe that makes my life have a different technique
Because no one else seems to notice
Shadows

By: Emma Spencer

Shadows on a black stormy night
Shadows in the bright daylight
I sit and wait as the cars go
Kids passing by
For me being shy
I don’t say hello
Water falling down
All the way to the ground
Dogs barking all day
Its best to stay locked away
Never going down to the monsters
They will get you.
Short=ME

By: Jessica Vazquez

I’m not just a human being
Like the rest of you
I’m me, the one of a kind me
The joyful me
The helpful me
The silly side of me
I can say as many characteristics about me
And the majority is what the rest of you have
The joyful me
The helpful me
The silly side of me
Is the special kind of me
But no one can own it like me
I’m not just a human being
I’m me, the one of a kind me
The me that no one can replace
Thank you for reading my short poem
Take this literally
Untitled 1
By: Silvia Woods

Silvia
They say from the dining room
I have something I want to say to you
Do you sing do you draw do you play a little tune
If so there are many opportunities to do
You an act you can paint you can perform on a stage
If you want to cook be chef there is so much to do
But at the end of the day it’s all up to you

Untitled 2
By: Silvia Woods

The feeling of happiness
There’s a grin across your face
Happiness is a feeling that’s easy to escape
No matter if it’s a thud of a gun or a boom of thunder
A smile can make the world much better
The thud could be an apple falling in a basket
A boom could be a building under construction
Its only if you think without seeing the happiness will fade
So think of the light and your smile will stay.
Untitled
By: Nathaniel Workman

Art is everywhere
Art is the buildings we live in
Art is in poetry we read
Art is the music we listen to
Art is the movies we watch
Art is everywhere

Art gets me through the day
I like to make art when I am mad
I listen to art when I am sad
I watch art when I am happy
Art gets me through the day

Art is everywhere
Art is the stuff we draw
Art is in books we read
Art is food we make
Art is the plays we watch
Art is everywhere
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