Time to Soar
Photographs and Poetry

A collaboration between Casita Maria Center for Arts & Education, Hunts Point Alliance for Children, and the Southern Boulevard Business Improvement District
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Those Events
Abby - 16

The annual events that united the community
Fairs that gave us an excuse to celebrate
The events kids anticipated
So that they could frolic and get their face painted
Drips of sweat running down their face
Leaving a trail which slightly removes their paint
As well as the soap and water from the bubbles lightly splashing them

The bubbles surround them as clouds do the sky
The kids jump as high as they can
Radiating yellow energy from their pure minds
Dressed in the vibrant colors mothers always tend to put their kids in
The pink sneakers, plaid pants, and bright blue air jordan 1s

The parents are watching
Glad that they’re occupied
Brightened by the smiles they see on their child’s face
Trying to give them what they could never have
Even if it starts off with face paint and bubbles

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Bright Orange Mural
Abby - 16

The artistic work put into all of the paintings around the neighborhood was
Made to inspire the teens that walk by
Made to give them that motivation we all deserve
Made to give them a more charming view

Yet it is also the artistic work most ignored
Even with its bright orange background
And big bold letters screaming to be noticed
The common eye takes no notice of it

The rush of the kids crowded around the door at dismissal
The fruity smell of girls perfume or the strong smell of men's cologne
All excited to leave the school doors behind
Blind to what was made for the purity of their minds

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The Joys of Childhood

Angie - 15

Elementary school was so much fun, the bright, colorful flow of happiness and the sounds of screaming and laughter fill the air. The kids of this image, unaware of the ups and downs of life, how cruel people can be.

They are joyful and happy to be able to have this experience Learning to paint, read, play instruments, opening their minds to different things. They think about lunch, excited to eat different kinds of sandwiches, soda, and Arizona's.

They're excited to go home, to come home and relax to hear the commotion of sounds outside of their windows late at night.
Fever Dream
Angie - 14

She’s in a dream, a memory from the past. She’s with friends, those she doesn’t talk to anymore. She treasures these memories. Back when the world was different.

She hangs out at the park with her friends after school. They sit and talk at the park, nothing special but just laughing and having a good time. Some play on the field, some go and buy refreshing drinks and ice cream from the deli down the block.

It’s spring, the time where the flowers bloom. The leaves start to come back after long, cold months. The sunshine shines bright. The forecast is sunny all week. People plan picnics and barbecues with family, kids done with school, just wanting it to finally become summer.

Sadly, this is all a dream, something she would love to be in. A fantasy in her mind.
What a boring day in this place I call home
But I’ll make it fun somehow
I love to skateboard, it’s one way I can roam
Well, the day still, I’ll roam right now

I do a few tricks
Jump over lots of bricks
But I look around
As I roll through town

The sun is always bright
It feels like I am doing a little flight
Every day I wish I can skateboard the country
But right now, I’m feeling hungry

People watch me all the time
They say I’m cool
Other people say I ruin their peacetime
And how I need to go back to school

One trick after another
I’m gonna be ready for my slumber
I look back on the path I went
And I say, “I wonder if I could jump over a tent”
Handstand
Katherine - 15

Hands on the ground
while feet glide in the air
vibrancy felt everywhere

giggles and laughs
flowing from here
to there

sparks of energy spiraling through their body
just as seltzer would react
when water is in contact.

1,2,3,4,5
Yankees fans have arrived
6,7,8,9,10
here comes sports season again
Nothing can stop them.
As they crash down to the same stool every afternoon
Their friends a few steps behind
Standing over their destined instruments
One picks up Maracas
The next a guitar
And the other grab a pair of drumming sticks
They each let themselves be controlled by their heart
Eager to spread their wings.

Nothing can stop them.
Music fills the room
seeping down the little crack under the door
down the street
and in no time everyone in the Bronx can feel it
the sensation of happiness,
their souls swayed to the rhythm of their hands,
their hands dancing on the keys.

Nothing can stop them.
As they stand up ready to leave,
their instruments no longer playing,
they are now standing outside of the door
but that music
the rhythm
the soul of everyone still plays.
Walk some blocks and you'll see it, 
a beautiful mural of her. 
With her enchanting powers, 
she's holding the sun up for you. 
Love presses up against your chin. 
Looking up you notice that there she is. 
She is all around, 
stems and leaves sprout from the Earth. 
They push themselves out of creaks in the window. 
They spring up, amazingly tall. 
Why would anyone ever leave the Bronx?
Sunny, warm day safe to say i can't complain
Red at the top of my head silver around me
Something in here reminds me of the smell burnt toast
Black in center brown in the edges

Small crowds
Some sit alone some don't
Some stand uniformed
another day of school

Sweshhh

The motion changes
Green apples fall from the hands of two laughing children
Sounds of melody
Their laughs not the apples

Ahahaha

But boy am i in the mood for some food now, too
Better off to try to distract myself
Look out the window

The community dancing in joy
Almost a 90s vibe
Young and old
Blacks and africans, hispanics all around
Where i live there is a mix you know
I also see trees
Green, red, yellowish, orange
Then, the sky
the beautiful blue

Looking around makes me recognize,
recognize how many things are around me
The different races
Different emotions
Different colors

You might be wondering where i'm going
Well i gotta go back home from a long day at work

Gas-like engine
The weather tastes like nice fresh water
the stage of the show
four people are standing there
singing to the mic
the mood is bright with their smiles
and their new guitar
sharing their love for music
entertaining them
peaceful mood and sounds
singing and playing
making the audience cheer
enjoying their time
as the weather shines just right
a calm fills the audience
as the wind blows the crowd with the rhythm

Blue Smiles
Stacy - 17

“We’re done”

Yellow and blue
Caps in hands
Smiles on faces

High school has come to an end

Sad to say not all of our friends made it
The bad influences took over them

Proud to say we are done
Only good things to come

“Time to conquer the world”

Now there’s nothing that can’t be done
High school days are DONE
Untitled
Sharay - 16

Grayish skies and baby blue rays of sunlight
Big brown bird soaring away from the smoke
coming from the vents on the street

The reflection from the sun on the lens of your glasses
Perfectly complimenting the limited but limitless sight
with the beautiful waters and polite sunshine

The bongos rhyming softly with the kalimba
The frozen bird soars away from the smoke, away from expectations,
into the faded rays of relaxation, over the calm waves of the lake

Like the quiet summer morning in July,
Peace and calmness with the sound of the kalimba
makes you feel more relaxed

As the freed bird soars over the plain fields
and through the vent’s smoke

do you feel at ease now?

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The highly expected letter

Adenike - 13

That day i came from school and saw that letter on my front entrance
In my mind i already knew what it said
My mom took a long stare at me and dragged me in the house
I was starting to have second thoughts
*What if i didn't get in, will my mom be mad…..no abby, don't think like that*
I finally snapped out of it and opened the wide yellow envelope
*Congratulations…..class of 2022*
Wow i made it  i told myself
Showed the paper to my mom
She read it and was so delighted
That memory will always stick with me

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Reflection
Jamil - 14

What was once a plain brick-wall
is now a symbol of art and community
Created by an imaginative mind
to express such ideas

Art imitates the environment it is in
The painting is a reflection of where I live
The colorful letters display
brick buildings, the subway, bridges
The day-to-day life of our community

The wall is stained with beauty
and marked with The Bronx
Passing by reminds me
of where I live

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The light that shines within

Maty - 14

Glowing in dim light, a soft sunrise smiling back.
Your eyes sparkle, a miracle just appeared right in front of you.
You can stare at it for hours and HOURS without getting tired.
The very bloom comes out.
At first glimpse you would think it's a tree underwater.
The way it blends in with the sky.
If a bird landed on the tree would it make the picture more beautiful?
Such a beautiful tree in a messed up world.

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**Memories held in bubbles**

Maty - 14

Look into a bubble and you can see your whole childhood in it. Daycare and Hula Hoops. Going to the park on sunny days. School trips to the Bronx Zoo. Making new friends and enjoying the moment. You feel comfort and safety in bubbles. Comfort you can't really feel in other things.

Let the world slip from your grasp as you blow these bubbles almost like an escape but something that you would have to let go of someday to make a new bridge to stand on top of.

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**White Flower Tree**

Anderlis - 13

Blossom tree blessed with light.
See you light up with green color light.
Special white flowers growing on top.
Branches are brown with graceful white tops.
The tree that stands tall and high.
Surrounded by the buildings up high.
The Bronx is full of trees and ground.
To where we see trees with flower crowns.

Walk the dog under the leaves of spring.
The tree flows with positivity and love.
Blossom tree so blessed and mighty.
Special colors you bring to lighting.
Dance along with the wind.

Remember the time of spring.
Grow and grow to summer.
You'll be strong and powerful.
Remember my childhood while I walk under the shadow.
Created by life and nature.
The tree is part of where I live.
You see the tree and now you know where you have been.
The process is so interesting
Watching her make such straight lines
Shaking the cans while thinking
And spraying with no drips.
I have no idea how she
Got the top lines

Even the words make a story
There are whole worlds in them
One of kids holding hands
Playing with the fire hydrant
And of sea

I spent 10 minutes of my day
Just watching a story be made

I would talk about the bubble of earth
Or the train with Casita Maria sprayed on it
How it feels like home
Beyond Writing
Jordan - 13

The poets of our culture
words that don’t lie yet have no true meaning
beyond just reading words
the story with true feeling

Songs bring us together
telling a story
making it your time
saying is your rhyme

Known for a hip
and to your hop
our culture's music is beyond writing
it's about your sighting

The birth of hip hop
the train of six
music is what makes
Hunts Point special.

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A painting on a school wall
It's not that small
It might have a deeper meaning
The woman is singing
With her fist in the air
Like she just doesn't care
She's standing up for justice
Even for the youngest

She's the opposite color
Standing up for all the black mothers
I don't know if this is what the painting means
But that's what it seems
She's singing into her mic
With all this might

But the real questions are
Is it really that far?
Is it really what I said it is?
Or is there something that I just missed?
I'll keep this in mind
Until I actually find
The answer to these rhymes
seeing all these murals
Naomi - 13

walking around the city, i see
graffiti letters, colorful murals
normal as tying your shoes

vandalism anywhere
not in the bronx, it's our way to express
our roots, heritage, who we are
representation flows through pieces of art

walking into all these murals, i see our
dancing, singing, writing,
creativity always flowing, rainy dusk or sunny dawn
constantly surrounding, filling you with joy

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Poom, Pinicitin
Leah - 13

Poom, pinicitin, poom, poom, pinici
The noises of tipico playing on the speakers in this small apartment in nyc.
Tios and tias dancing everywhere
Teens keeping their little corners to themselves
Kids running around and jumping
Dogs barking and sniffing
The smell of mofonguitos de camarones spreading around the entire room
This is what parties with my dominican family feel like.
Let’s just say, we’re pretty hype.

Besides the food and hanging with my cousins and the dogs,
one of the funnest things to do at these parties is dance.
you just get lost in the moment.
Any negativity that happened before and anything on your mind just disappears
and all you’re thinking of is the music and moving to the music.

Feeling those vibrations under your feet
And you and your dance partner just laughing and singing along
Going to the Banknote for Storefront

Michael - 14

Stress is a slight heartache
after eating food a little too quickly.

Holding a crushing boulder
after climbing up a high mountain.
A big exam tomorrow

that's worth half of my grade. To take away this pain,
I write the thousands of textbooks
off my back.
If that doesn’t work,

I write a song
about walking on air.

Guiding my head
in a positive mindset.
The Bronx is Dancing
Mike - 13

The Bronx is dancing
Dancing to all types of music
From Hip Hop to Country
From R&B to Soul

The Bronx is dancing
Dancing is smiling and having a good time
Dancing through the scent of

baked mac

potato salad

chicken drumsticks

barbecue ribs

sausage

pernil

The Bronx is dancing
with their families and loved ones

The Bronx is dancing
mourning the lost

The Bronx is dancing
Curator of Time
Jordan - 13

Music born and raised
Analog of time
The drum is still there

Hunts Point is where hip hop was born
Progressing beyond that
Now with Bachata and Merengue
The drum is still there

Movement of our culture
Going under the melody
Tapping away
The drum is still there

Soft or hard
Never the same
The drum is still there

All different cultures
Since the beginning
The drum is still there

Tempo of the beat
Curator of time
The drum is still there

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Bright Rhythm
Jamil - 14

A face sits on a yellow circular canvas
like the sun, it rises

Behind it, the saxophone screams in joy
a trumpet blows and a drum taps
The sonic vibrations shake your bones
couraging your body to maneuver with the beat

Make it vibrant

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Untitled
Steven - 13

Kids playing on the playground
So naive and young to the world
Still having no worries
Better enjoy the world while they can
Because life gets really hard once you have worries

School, homework, traffic,
So many worries
Even your own parents eventually become worries
Better enjoy the moment

A once in a lifetime opportunity
Childhood is
Rejoice

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Hunts Point Alliance for Children Staff

Director of Programs - Ayosike Akingbade
Mighty Quills Director - Amina Henry
Storefront Ensemble Director - Eli Thacker Taylor
Storefront Ensemble Writing Teacher - Karl Iglesias
Storefront Ensemble Teaching Artist - Ishmael Muhammad
High School Manager - Samuel Marrero
Middle School Manager - Christie Love Santiago
Arts Education Intern - Kate Logan