

LIBRARY ZINE!

VOICES FROM ACROSS
THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

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Greetings creative New Yorkers!

The support and enthusiasm we received after the publication of the first Library Zine built the foundation for us to create a second issue. Though we as the editorial team are the foreman of this operation, it is you, our contributors, content creators, and readers, who have built the voice and meaning of this publication. Without you we would be left with only a blank booklet read by none.. Thank you for your work and warm reception.

We decided to base this issue's theme on the New York Public Library's 2017 Summer Reading Challenge Theme: Build a Better World. We found it particularly relevant at this point in time as many are looking for ways to build upon and improve their communities and consequently the whole world. Everyday bigger buildings replace and reshape our skyline as New Yorkers demand more: more buildings, institutions, parks, spaces, and access to these places that build intangible but indefatigable communities.

This issue is a compilation of ideas that somehow or other fit together to form a part of the blueprint by which New Yorkers work to build both a better city and world. From calls for love to questions scratching at the foundation of civilization, subculture appreciation to pure escapism, this collection of ideas should sprout a seed of inspiration and motivation in the minds of our readers whose hands, now holding this volume tight will go forth and shape this very world. As our young patrons wrote for the Library's summer reading essay contest: reading can and will build a better.

Thank you again to all of our contributors and subscribers. Please note that this will be our final physical volume. All further issues of the Library Zine, as well as issues 1 and 2, can be found on www.nypl.org.

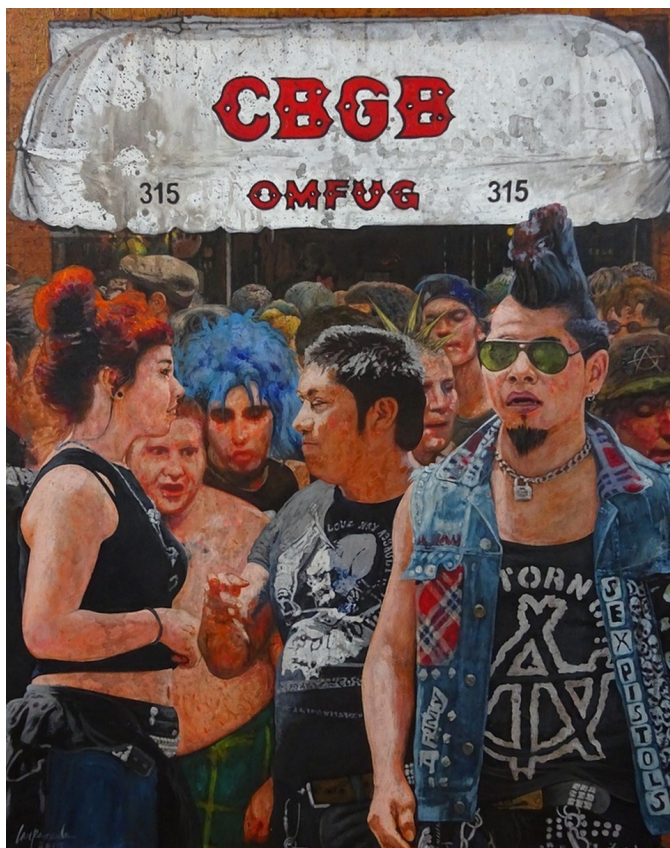


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Build a Better World

Build a Better World Through Reading! The New York Public Library challenges its patrons to read more during the summer and with this great theme, there is no doubt it was a huge success. But what about writing? Here, you'll find the poetry and prose from that express how a better world can be built. You never know...one of these pieces will inspire you to build up your own world. Thoughts and feelings expressed here are solely those of the authors.

Art and Picture Collection, The New York Public Library. "Statue Of Liberty, No. 1."
New York Public Library Digital Collections.

Poetry

The Cell

Ijaaza EL-Nuwaubun

I am Cell. The tool that is used to manifest flesh.
I am the Neucleus...From where the soul of all
things exist. I am
the essence, the DNA Strand. I am woman I am
man. I am generations of souls, I am Trillions of
Adams and Atoms old.
I am the all from the All. I am, I can be, I will be.
What has
Existed before me has existed for
eternity. Eternal is me
and thee; or me, myself and I. Why? I am Cell
created by
thee to be.

From the fish in the sea, to the seed of a tree, it
is me. I am Nature's Child. I was created by the
Nile. I am from the All that gives light which
darkness yield. I appeal to the universe. Infinity
spewed the light of life into me. I became a
separate soul...I became unique. I have the
power to feel, touch, and think. According to my
creator's choice I did not need a voice.

I was sent to this illusional state to procreate. I
am Cell. I create
Building blocks in the darkness of the Womb...
like in a Tomb
the light comprehends it not. I am Cell. Mighty
Mitochondria.
The Omm and the Umm of all living, Goddess of
giving, and the mystery of life that begins with a
spark of light, and the judgement of whom I
choose to be.

Thanksgiving

Gil Fagiani

without turkey, 1969.
The best we can do
is bodega-hustled cold cuts,
stale French bread, canned apricots.

The rain hasn't let up all day.
The staff schedules extra groups
to sop up the self-pity that seeps
through the house.

It's evening and a bunch of us
just finish the kitchen detail:
washing dishes, cleaning the table,
taking out the trash.

We're stretched out on the floor
nobody has smokes—not even rollies—
when Betty starts singing the lead
to "Long Lonely Nights,"
by Lee Andrew and the Hearts.
Victor takes tenor, I add bass.

Julio kicks off "Lonely Tear Drops,"
by Jackie Wilson, Sean joins,
along with Georgie and me.
Before we're finished Betty croons
Little Anthony and the Imperials'
"Tears on My Pillow," our voices
in tune, harmony tight.

We're on autopilot when Betty
jumps up, mixes cornmeal, water,
a little salt, pepper,
molds the batter into hoe cakes,
fries them in a greasy skillet,
serves them like communion wafers.

This Need

Sandra Chukwudumebi Obiora

I have a need.
To see my sisters and my brothers succeed.
To have the world understand what success truly means.
This success is not about expensive pieces of paper or series of numbers.
This success is all about consistency.
This success is all about a love for the world.

I have a need.
To hear a different news about my neighbours both far and wide.
Not to hear that this one has just bombed the other.
Not to learn that this one threw a missile yesterday,
Or that the other is planning to throw one back at noon time tomorrow.
Not to hear that one stabbed his brother, and the other shot him right back.
Not to hear of bloodshed here, and depression there.

I have a need.
To hear some amazing news about the countries of this earth.
To hear that this country is sending flowers of reconciliation to its neighbour.
That another is writing a poem of love, and blowing kisses of peace to its enemies.

I have a need.
A need to see a beautiful tomorrow.
A need to see that the poor are made rich. That the hungry gets fed.
That the depressed breaks out into wild dancing.
That the sick finds hope, not abandonment.
That the imprisoned finds joy, and a new path for life.

I have a need.
To see my teachers grow wiser and stronger.
Bolder and even more creative.
I have a need.
To see students become success stories. Not the success stories of times past.
Not the failed successes of our ancestors.
Not the success that destroys nature.
Not the success that is greedy, and starving for the lives of the weak.
Not the success that leaves no future for our children.

My need is simple.
To have us all experience a new experience.
To usher us all into a new reality.
A new type of success that equates to loving thy neighbour.

Be Black

Rogerline Christopher

At the age of five you were convinced you had to
be white to be pretty
You stood in the mirror saying if only I had blonde
hair
If only I had blue eyes
If only I had known

I couldn't sit with the blacks because I wasn't
black enough
I couldn't sit with the whites because I was too
black
I've finally accepted that I wouldn't belong

You spent so much time looking at bleaching kits
Seeking white privilege
Just wondering I could do anything if i was white
I could be anything if i was white
I could be acceptable
Beautiful
Wanted

The ideas that was considered ghetto or ratchet
are now big trends
Putting perms and relaxers in ours hairs to make
them as straight as barbie dolls
Us kinky 4A, 4B, and 4C hair types would do any-
thing for straight hair
Sewing weaves in our heads
We strayed away from potential

At the age of 17 you looked into the eyes of the
oppressor
Watching them make the transition from white to
black
Putting on hazelnut or espresso foundations
The oppressor wanted to be me
They wanted my skin

They didn't want to be black when we couldn't
breathe
We couldn't breathe each time we rejected a part
of our heritage

Love Like Music

Sandra Chukwudumebi Obiora



Irma and Paul Milstein Division of United States History, Local History and Genealogy, The New York Public Library. "Concert for the inmates of the Charity Hospital, Blackwell's Island" *The New York Public Library Digital Collections*.

We need love like the sun and the moon. Whose importance is undeniable.

The sun who without it everything will wither away.

The moon whose absence would have us clashing straight into the sun.

We need love like no other. Unfailing, indescribable, unimaginably possible.

We need love like music. Love that never finishes.

We need love like the stars. Love that burns bright and bold.

We need love like the notes, the notes of Beethoven that never die away.

We need love like the sun and the moon. Whose absence we could perish without.

We need love for our neighbour. For our neighbour is like the whole world.

We need love like music. Love that never ends or dies.

Love that can be played, replayed, enjoyed.

Love that never fails to excite, to humble, to purify, to celebrate.

Love that never fails to remember and re-enact the happy.

We need love like the stars. Love that burns bright and bold.

Bright like the sun.

Love whose existence is never ending, always penetrating.

Love whose appearance is always intriguing, always amazing.

We need love like the notes, the notes of Beethoven that never die away.

Love like the expressions of 'a great big world'.

Love like the fire ignited as the pianist, and violinist set their fingers in motion.

Love like the beauty of compositions come to life at the hands of concert masters.

Dancing Africa

Sandra Chukwudumebi Obiora

Africa is dancing.

The Africa you know is not the Africa to be.

The Africa you remember is not the Africa that be.

The Africa you see is not the Africa I envision.

For the Africa I see is lush and blush with glory.

Africa is moving.

For the Africa you imagine is seating by pollution.

The Africa you picture is one ridden with ill will
and ill health.

An Africa of blood and sores. An Africa of pain and
smiles.

An Africa of mud and lions. With Giraffes and hip-
pos.

Africa is Transcending.

For the sound of Africa is one stained in rebellion
and crisis.

An Africa with tears and grinding teeth.

An Africa post oppression, past oppression, yet
oppressed.

An Africa of regrets, of dirty babies, dreadlocks
and afros.

Africa is Uplifted.

I tell you however that this Africa you know is less
than a percentage of the full picture.

For my Africa is bold and wild. Wild but intelli-
gent. Intelligent yet humble.

My Africa is chocolate. Bitter, brown, white, yet
so sweet.

My Africa pangs for peace, for harmony, to be un-
derstood just as she is.

Africa is Elevated.

For she swerves and twists to the beats of the
percussion.

Skin glistening in the lamp light. Dreads swinging
left and right.

For she dances in abandon. Abandoning her
shame, her guilt, her regrets.

Africa is dancing. Dancing away her sorrows.
Dancing away all threats.

For each shift and bend of her beautiful figure is a
shift and turn to the future.

For My Africa is beautiful. My Africa is kind. She
is strong, fierce, persevering, resilient.

Short Stories & Essays

The Chosen Ones

Bernadette Pasley

When I was a teenager living on the Lower East Side, my best friend's mother was friendly with a man in the neighborhood who did odd jobs for her. I'll call him Charlie. Charlie was a slight, middle-aged man whose skin was slightly lighter than olive. I wasn't sure of his nationality. If I had to guess, I would say he was Italian. Charlie sat around our apartment complex most days, brooding and looking as if the cares of the world were his alone. I had never seen Charlie smile.

My aunt was raising me, and while she wasn't friends with him, I suppose they could have been considered acquaintances. When I heard Charlie's voice for the first time, he was speaking to my aunt, giving her some news about my friend's mother. His voice was soft and sandpapery, a lot like Vito Corleone's in *The Godfather*. Charlie ignored me and, actually, I was almost certain he didn't even know that I existed.

Not that I cared whether or not some older

guy knew I was on the planet. I didn't even wonder what was making him so sad. I was too wrapped up in myself, getting my hair straightened, coveting Fashion Fair Cosmetics and being shy around boys. I laughed at him with my friend, who filled me in on his friendship with her mother on a daily basis. "He always looks so worried," I said one day. She laughed, but I could tell she had never noticed before.

I was pushing a shopping cart down Rivington Street one day, taking a broken TV to a repair shop. When I arrived at the stoop which led to the shop, there was Charlie, sitting on the top step, as sad as ever. I began to pull the cart up the steps, while Charlie, facing forward, ignored me. As I passed him, I heard Vito Corleone: "You sellin' something, Bernadette?"

I was taken aback. I looked at Charlie, who continued facing forward, not even looking at me. My teenage narcissism went into high gear. *How did he know my name?* I was too stunned even to answer him. Instead, I stumbled into the shop in

answer him. Instead, I stumbled into the shop in silence. I dropped off the TV, then left, glancing at Charlie as I passed him. Things were back to normal. He was lost in his brooding and, once again, I didn't exist.

What else did he see and hear while hiding in the shadows of his pain? What did he notice on the streets while he wrestled with whatever demon was tormenting him? Did he see anyone or anything that could take his mind off his troubles, provide a distraction? Years later, as I wrestled my own demons, there was something in my own line of vision that did provide a distraction.

I was living in the Bronx, in Morris Heights, not too far from Burnside Avenue. It must have been the late '90s or early 2000s. When I was around Burnside I usually saw it. Whether I was going to or coming from the subway, riding the BX40 bus, or walking to the library. There it was. "It" was a "he," a tiny, very thin Latino man, dressed all in black, with what looked like fake medals on his shirt, wearing a visored military cap bearing a fake insignia. His face was ruddy and unshaven, the growth mostly white. He wore dark glasses.

A little bundle of energy, he moved around Burnside and the surrounding streets like a man on a mission. A mission to clean up the neighborhood. No matter that his actions led to the same results as someone's run on a treadmill, or someone's climb up a greased pole. He carried on,

as if what he was doing would result in a better world or, at least, a better neighborhood.

The little man picked up trash (with his bare hands), used an old broom to sweep out gutters, and carried large discarded items halfway up blocks to where he thought they belonged. He was in constant motion nearly every time I saw him, with a serious, determined look on his face, which gave no indication that he thought his actions were futile.

Only one time did I see him motionless. I was walking home from the subway and saw him standing in front of a storefront, near PS 26. He stood with his arms folded, legs slightly apart, facing straight ahead. He was obviously taking a break, but it was clear he was not totally relaxed. There was an expectant look about him, along with an air of importance. He knew there was more work to do and that he was the only one equipped to do it.

The little man never talked to anyone, or, at least, I never saw him doing it. No one talked to him either. I never learned his name. In fact, I always felt I was the only one who even noticed him. It was as if he existed for my own private entertainment, a secret escape from the personal battles I was facing. I would see him and think, *at least it's not that bad*. Then, one day I was on the BX40, which was stopped at a light at the intersection of Burnside and University Avenues. The corner of my left eye faced the street and I saw

the man doing his work. The driver of the bus spoke out: "They need 10, 15 more guys like that around here."

I was a bit shocked. Less at what the driver said than at the fact he had spoken in the first place. I glanced at the driver, then turned to a woman sitting next to me. "He doesn't even wear gloves!" I said. The woman seemed to think for a few seconds. "I think he wears gloves sometimes," she said. What she didn't say (and what she might have been thinking) was, "He's not hurting anyone." Embarrassed, I nodded and turned away.

I began to think differently about the little man: What was his story, anyway? Drugs? Mental illness (Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder)? Both? There is an episode of "The Golden Girls" in which a neighbor of the Girls, played by Rita Moreno, muses, "the mentally ill are the chosen." In all likelihood, the little man was one of the chosen as well.

Where did the little man go at night? What did he do in poor weather? I don't know if he had a roof over his head. I don't know if he had enough to eat. Several years before I left the neighborhood, I stopped seeing him around. Out of sight, out of mind. I didn't realize he'd been gone until well after I'd left. Every so often he crosses my mind and, after I remember the tough times I was going through, I wonder about him.

When I wonder I am usually out on the street looking for a place to toss an ice cream wrapper or

some other piece of trash. I was taught to hold on to my garbage until I can find the right place for it. What about people who didn't receive the same lesson? Children who attended PS 26 must have seen the little man at work. It's sad knowing that at least some of them were never taught as I was. How many of them thought of the little man, think of him today, when they are ready to drop their trash on a sidewalk or any other place it doesn't belong?

Nearly 20 years later, one man who was a student at that school might remember and decide, just that one time, to stuff his candy wrapper into his back pocket, then later, watch as it slips from his fingers into a trash can next to a playground. He may never again think of the little man, and may never again dispose of his trash properly, but if one child on her way to that playground saw what he did, it was worth it, and worth all the time and work put in by the little man.

Charlie died, sometime during the 1980s, I believe. When I think of him now, I see him as he usually was, sitting on a bench in our apartment complex, hunched over, looking at the ground. What if the little man were picking up trash nearby? Maybe Charlie would raise his head and watch him for a few minutes. I'd like to think he would get up, walk over to him and speak to him in that Vito Corleone voice. The little man would be surprised. He would put his hand to his chest. *Me?*

As he'd reach out to shake the little man's hand, Charlie's face would light up with a big smile. Tears would form in the little man's eyes. He would drop the trash, rub his hands on his clothes and let one disappear into Charlie's. Charlie would let go, and they would walk away together. I would follow at a distance, watching, as they walked down Rivington Street, turned at the corner of Stanton, and disappeared.

Home World

Felix Foote

I will always remember the day I started working to make things right again. It was the same day that I lost my best friend.

To be honest, I had been expecting that I would lose Thorne. We had known each other for decades, had spent years together like brothers, and yet that didn't seem to stop him drifting away from me around the time the world started falling apart. I gave him the space, thinking that just like the rest of us, he needed time to come to terms with what was happening. However, he had been staying in that space for days, isolating himself as things got worse and worse. The few times I tried to call him were met with anger, and more silence. I gave up, thinking that he would end our friendship with a slow, silent struggle and not even a phone call to notify me.

Imagine my surprise when one day, I looked through my living room window to see him running towards me from the car he parked by my house. I didn't even have time to smile before he grabbed my hand and dragged me away.

"Slow down! You're going to get us pulled over."

Thorne didn't even look at me. He just shook his head and chuckled, showing the amount of teeth in his smile that a deranged hyena would

during a pleasant dream.

"There aren't any cops on this road. They're on the other side of town. I checked before leaving."

"Checked?" I asked.

"Put trackers on them. All of them. You don't even want to know how I was able to put the darned things on all of their badges."

Thorne shook the ragged dyed-blond hair out of his eyes before staring at me, eagerly.

"Don't you want to know?"

"So you've had time to put trackers on police officers and not on letting your loved ones know you're not dead?"

This seemed to stop Thorne for a moment. Concern lit up his worn-out eyes like the lightning that flickered outside of the car. Then he snickered again and ruffled my hair.

"Hands on the wheel!"

"You were always the sensitive one. No, I planted them ages ago. You never know when you'll need to avoid the fuzz."

Not even his use of corny terminology could cheer me up.

"You told me your work wouldn't involve breaking the law."

"That was before the law began to maim

instead of help.” He lowered his head and, oh deary me, growled. “Besides, my work is too important for that.”

Fine, I thought. At least my work didn't turn my hair grey before I turned 30.

The car hit another bump in the road, subjecting us to another horrifying moment of zero-gravity before we plummeted back to our seats.

He opened my window for me before I could say a word. At least he remembered the face I make just before I get carsick.

“Let it all out, Terry,” he said, “and let all the bad things out with it. All your fears and tears, your nightmares and worries.” He stretched his arms wide. “Where we're going, we'll never need to see them again!”

I didn't answer. I was too busy letting my worries out through the window.

There weren't many places left near town where one could work in peace, and yet, Thorne had managed to find one. It was an old warehouse, one that had been abandoned and left to rot among the dreary overgrown land around it. I was surprised to learn that it had been left behind like that, until I realized just how broken-down it was. If things could truly be held together be God's will, then this was practically a holy site. Forget weathering a storm; I bet that a light breeze would take it out like a house of gossamer cards. Thorne babbled something about

“reinforcement” and “perfect covers” as he dragged me inside.

It only struck me when I was going down the basement steps how, with anybody else, this was a terrible idea. Actually, this was a terrible idea even with Thorne. Especially with Thorne. Perhaps my parents should have spent more time teaching me how not to let my friends pressure me into following them into dark basements. I stood at the bottom of the steps, waiting for the horrible consequences.

Thorne turned on the lights.

Thorne was a genius. He may have had an odd sense of humor, a terrifying smile, and a tendency to wear the same clothes for days until primordial soup formed in the sweat stains, but he was a genius nonetheless. We both always had interests in science and technology, but while I contented myself with making small machines in my spare time, Thorne simply kept growing. He aimed for the stars knowing that he would get there, and packed enough supplies so that he would last until the next galaxy. I contented myself with waving to him from Earth. I knew that he was working on big things, especially from how he bragged about them before he started avoiding us, but I didn't know how big they were until I saw the laboratory in that basement warehouse.

Thorne walked on ahead, leaving me to gape.
“Terry, come on!”

Eventually, I started moving, but my eyes kept looking at all of his work. If a museum about advanced machines had been visited by a tornado and then had a path cleared through it, the result would have looked like the lab. Where there weren’t machines, there were discarded parts and tools. Where there weren’t parts and tools, there were piles upon piles of papers. Plans, equations, ideas... There were enough to fill a library. Thorne never did like to lose anything.

When I finally reached Thorne, he was already turning on one of the machines at the end of the room. He was muttering wildly under his breath, but I didn’t bother to make out what he was saying. The machine he was activating was a box-like piece of equipment that was hooked up to a different apparatus entirely. This other machine was a long metal tube that formed the perimeter of a large, thick sheet that shimmered unusual colors in the light. The colors were from a new rainbow; they were bright and hurt my eyes. When I looked away, I forgot what they even looked like.

“Thorne...” I said.

The final switch was flicked. All around us, the walls thrummed with the sheer energy of what Thorne had turned on.

The sheet shone as a wall of the burning colors, and then it was gone.

I gasped. Fresh forest air entered my lungs.

There was a forest in front of me, clean and glittering and perfect, inside the metal tube. The sky was a shade of blue that I never imagined could be real. The grass looked plush and fresh. What were the most unusual, however, were the trees. They were too young, too short, but it was a small complaint.

And then there was Thorne, standing next to the doorway with his arms crossed like the smug little guy he is. Even if he deserved showing off, it wasn’t any less irritating.

“Is it...” I began.

“Not a projection. Not a fake, a phony, or a tease.”

Thorne picked up an apple from his workbench and tossed it into the forest. There was a shimmer of the colors before it landed among the grass.

“Pocket dimension. I made it,” he chirped. “Not just the machine. I managed to find out *how pocket dimensions function and create one. Then it was all a matter of making the world the way I wanted it to.*”

“There’s more?” I said, my voice only a whisper.

“Well, a little bit. It’s all untamed wilderness out there.” He smiled his hyena grin. “Except for one house equipped with modern comforts. Just big enough for two.”

I finally turned away from the beauty and looked at my friend. He was staring at me with something that I could actually call affection. He

threw an arm around my shoulders and sighed.

"You're looking at our new home."

"What?"

"Oh, come on. Don't sound like you don't love it. You know it's so much better than this dump."

It did look better. Every part of it did. It was so unlike the world I knew, the grey, filthy place I had to call home for all of my life.

"Now?" I stammered.

"Of course, now. I'm sorry I had to spring it on you like this, but I just couldn't stand it anymore." For the first time that evening, he looked somber. "This world is ruined. But we've got a better one waiting for us."

Suddenly, he stepped away and took out two suitcases from under a table.

"I've already packed our bags. Got plenty of clothes, food, books, and board games." He winked. "Only the essentials."

He shoved one in my arms and turned to the new world.

"Say goodbye, Terry. We're going to a better place."

He stepped forward, and stopped, just before the entrance.

He turned.

"Terry?"

I stared at him, the man who was ready to head off into paradise.

"You really did this?"

Thorne looked from side to side, seeking help

from an audience that wasn't there.

"Yes. I did," he said, nodding as if teaching a young child.

"You're telling me," I said, my voice soft and slow, "that you have enough technology to make a pocket dimension, and set up a, a, perfect little nature planet, and didn't think about helping this one?"

"You're not making sense."

"People are *dying*, Thorne! *Everything is. For years, everything has gotten sick and confused, and, and you could have helped!*"

A red light started flashing on the main unit.

Thorne scoffed, blinking in disbelief.

"Unbelievable. I've made a home for us away from all of this, and this is the thanks I get. I always tell you that you're the sensitive one. You're worrying about people that probably caused things to get to where they are today."

"I'm worried about society!"

"Exactly!"

The main unit beeped and was drowned out by Thorne's voice.

"Do you really think I could have done anything? Even my ideas aren't enough to help billions of stupid people."

"*Everyone's stupid to you, aren't they?*"

Thorne backed away in shock. I hadn't meant to start shouting, but now I couldn't stop.

"You're convinced you're so much smarter than everyone else!" I went on. "And it might even

be true. But that is nothing compared to how stupid you think everyone is, like that somehow makes them not matter anymore. You hate them so much, you can't even be bothered to help them."

I threw the suitcase to the ground with a slam.

"You think everyone's stupid." My voice cracked as I said, "Even me."

Thorne looked from me to the world beyond the screen. He made it look like he had reached a decision, but I knew that he had made it long before.

"I suppose I do," he said.

The lab's warning lights burst into life around us as the unit's beeping finally elevated into shrieks. The forest beyond the screen was flickering now, the unusual colors now mixed with furious shades of red and black.

"The battery!" said Thorne. "I've never let it run this long!"

With a yelp of panic, he leapt through the screen, clutching his suitcase to his chest like a babe in his arms. As soon as he had gone through, the main unit burst into flames, and so did the gateway. The image of the forest melted away until it was only a smoking screen.

The mess wasn't hard to put out once I had gotten the fire extinguisher in hand. After that, I took care of the warning lights. Soon, the laboratory was stable, but now it felt still and lifeless, responding to the absence of its creator.

Looking down, I saw that the suitcase had burst open from when I had thrown it down so violently. I gathered the scattered contents, mindlessly sifting through them before I realized what they were.

Chocolate chip cookies and lemonade juice boxes. The plays of Aristophanes. A ridiculous musical about an adventure through the Rocky Mountains. T-shirts with characters from a variety of science fiction and fantasy stories on them. The RPG that Thorne and I had played every week when we were in high school. The first solar powered robot that we had built together.

It was all of my favorite things, packed with care by Thorne.

Exhausted, I sat down on the fallen suitcase and watched the foam drip off the scorched, ruined machinery. Some of it must have gotten to the emergency systems, because its shrieking shortly stopped. Soon, the only sounds in the lab were from my own sobbing.

I really was the sensitive one.

After that day, I gathered the papers from the laboratory and tried to develop some of Thorne's ideas into real inventions that could help people. I discovered that he actually had tried to follow a heroic route of thought before going into "escape into paradise" mode. There were models for more efficient solar panels, better water purification systems, and even something that could have led

to ridding the world of nuclear waste buildup, if Thorne hadn't spilled coffee on most of it.

I couldn't do most of the work on my own. Fortunately, I managed to find people who could help. Now, the world shines a little brighter. It's not a paradise, but things have definitely gotten better.

To me, the most important project of all is fixing the one piece of machinery that we can't figure out. Thorne deserves to see how he helped the world, whether he wanted to or not. At the very least, he owes me an apology.

The Artist of the Visible

Mary Di Lucia

It began with a small line, traced on the wheel of a bicycle in a special ink. The bike was ridden throughout the town. Every sidewalk was marked with the line, it was feathered in shape, like something that had fallen from a small goose or large dove.

No but really, it had begun before that: pieces of thick white paper, smeared with paint the deep color and thickness of jam, landscapes of blunt horizontal line, grossly orange suns, and bright latticework of trees in green and brown. Everyone had one on their refrigerator, or pinned to the wall above the table where the mail piled up.

There were then the postcards mailed to everyone, ornately crisscrossed in gold-leaf, the faces of saints, each halo intricately curlicued, radiating, the eyes of the holy crossed out in black felt-tip.

She did this in the mornings before school. The kitchen smelled faintly of cigarettes from the neighbor downstairs, who smoked before making lunch for the children each day.

She won awards in the local contests. The awards were distributed in a gymnasium with a grey linoleum floor. She was embarrassed and made her

mother or older brothers go to collect the awards, though sometimes she wore them pinned to the front of her dress.

There was art school—first in the city close to the home of her childhood, accessible by a small local train. Then the academy in the larger city. She rented a room there. Supplies were expensive. She won scholarships. She spent summers at the seaside, in special colonies with studios for artists. There were cottages on wooded slopes, all meals provided, a tiny bed with an iron frame, and unlimited time to paint and paint.

She did not call herself a painter or an artist.

One of these summers, in the far north, an outpost with no nighttime, only day, a day which endured for so long that the whole summer was one undifferentiated block of time, she ran out of canvas. The mail and deliveries of supplies came in by small ferry only once every few weeks. She stretched bedsheets between the trees. She used a small pine branch dipped in a watery jar of ink, thinned from the local creek. When this dried, she folded it up and mailed it back to the city, where the gallery hung it in the window. It sold immediately. She ran out of sheets and used the back wall

of the cottage, the ceiling above the bed, the door of the shed in the yard.

She was written about. She was in demand. Less and less, she appeared, and when she did it was always in a black dress with a silver thread shot through, a woman from the mountains had woven and sewn it for her, in a style that made her seem mature beyond her years.

It became difficult to describe her work for it was difficult to see it. The early days of the tiny had flowered and passed: the small colored squares of paper, pinned to the walls like butterflies, each with a sketch on it, a map or a flag, in colored pencil. The days of squares of glass that caught the light of the windows that they tilted against, the days of mosaics made of colored shards soldered together with precious metals, the days of small notebooks, like a child's copybooks, with illuminated letters: *a* for apple, *f* for flower, *s* for shell. The small framed portraits of the heads of children or famous women. The days of the tiny were gone.

The great transformation occurred during the time she spent living with other artists in the most prestigious of academies, the most coveted of situations: like four dozen eggs in a carton, each with its own cardboard depression to rest in, separate, but not alone, protected from cracking, but still rubbing up too closely together. Food and drink

and a place to sleep were provided, a workspace, but the kitchen was shared between the forty-eight of them. Every time she came down to rinse out a brush or boil water for a cup of tea, there was someone there, asking her about her work, asking to see, commenting on the weather or whether the heater were working, whether a sweater were needed. She bought a pair of skis, and found places on the mountain where she could work, in solitude, in her parka, in pencil for paint would have frozen. Yes, it was the company, and the fake solitude of being one among forty-eight¹ which had driven her to find her truest solitude, the truest most desolate place where she could embark upon the work she had been born for.

On the side of the mountains, on the rocky slides below the precipices, she first made the pieces that no one could write about, that few would ever see up close: tiny pencil strokes, faint like the tracks of those first bicycle tires. Delicate as a baby's eyebrows. Thousands, millions, of strokes, one for each fracture between stones, for each crack in the dirt, the cracks accumulating to form the cones of mountains, the ridges that stretched towards the edge of the continent.

1. The forty-eight, ensconced in a lavish chateau and toasted by visiting dignitaries and directors, by heads of state, and by revered and established artists who had already made irreproachable contributions and were eager to become the patrons and associates of these potential protégés.

After months and months of twenty-hour days, she had a whole series of them, rendered directly atop the geographical features they represented. Passersby would mistake them for the mountains themselves. A woman tidying the kitchen would glance out the window, then glance again. Had the horizon been altered? Was it the shadow of a passing cloud that had changed it? The work had replaced and even improved the usual landscape, it had begun to replace the sky itself, the perimeter of the planet touching up against the atmosphere, the space beyond, a new stratosphere had been born.

So, in short, at the same time her work became impossible to transport, impossible to convey to the galleries and even the museums that sought it, impossible to simply bear witness to in any conventional or predictable way, the more invisible and ineffable it became—the more visible, the more inevitable. It was impossible to wait for a bus, to go for a walk in the fields outside of any city, and not see it. It was impossible to breathe and not feel the tickling of a tiny brushstroke, to turn one's head on the pillow before awakening and not detect, deep in the ear, the scratching of a pencil.

As biographers have all agreed, she was a woman of small stature; into old age, she had maintained the nature and character of the young girl she had

been, the girl who had worn those first awards and medals pinned to her pinafore. And yet her work was monumental, impossible to be captured by the largest institutions or to conceive of by the most powerful critical minds, impossible to reproduce in the double page spreads of the prominent magazines and journals, or the glossy folios strewn over the tops of crystal tables in the summer houses of wealthy collectors. It was impossible to construct an edifice around it, to contain it, impossible to raise a dome that would protect it and yet preserve its wild and terrestrial expansiveness, though the most renowned and ambitious had tried. There was a theory, whispered among the philosophers and geographers, that only the earth itself could do this.

This penultimate most public and talked about era of her work was what finally preserved her independence and solitude, the great quiet she had sought all along. She was part of the host of the history of art, of the greatest artists, whose portraits lined the galleries of the most venerable museums in the most ancient and hallowed capitals and whose legacies had withstood revolution and catastrophe. She was part of the diaspora of marble and alabaster that stretched across the history of humanity. And it was all because of her tiny brushstrokes rendered in the sharpened pencil of the schoolchild, the solitude of the forest, the infinity of the treelines, the views of a planetary

geography from the windows of airplanes. She was not one of the forty-eight eggs, of the ninety-six, or the hundred. She was herself alone.

See, she is there: a small woman, in a content and accompanied solitude, amidst tracings of lines and shadows, and the shadows of those tracings, the tracteries of the shadows beneath those same shadows, accurate, precise, the millions and billions of the tiniest of lines that converged to make something larger than themselves, and her most private self at the center of it, a self-portrait really, another self, into which before she long she would enter never to return to us.

Rogerline Christopher is a junior in high school and has been writing since he was in the third grade. He has recently started drawing.

Gil Fagiani's latest book is *Logos* (Guernica Editions, 2015). Gil co-hosts the Italian American Writers' Association's monthly readings in Manhattan. In 2014, he was the subject of a New York Times article by David Gonzalez, "A Poet Mines Memories of Drug Addiction."

Felix Foote is a young writer who hopes to publish novels one day. For now, he practices by writing short stories and reading in the name of research. He currently goes to Bard College at Simon's Rock in Great Barrington, MA.

Ijaaza EL-Nuwaubun began writing at 7 years old. She is a native New Yorker residing in NYC, most of her adult life. She is featured in several anthologies, authorsden.com, FanStory.com and currently featured in "Zoo Dreams", a Children's poetry book by Nina Goldworth.

Sandra Chukwudumebi Obiora aims to provide a deeper understanding to those aspects of life that the rest of humanity tends to ignore. She wishes to offer hope, joy, love, light, color, and meaning to the many things that fall just below our standard human observation radar.

Bernadette Pasley is a former sports writer who has lived in New York City since the age of seven. She is the founder and editor of *Lady At The Bat*, an award-winning baseball blog. Her other work has been featured online at Five2OneMagazine.com.

Mary Di Lucia is a writer and teacher who came to New York for an MFA program 15 years ago and never left. While mostly a poet, with work published on Poetry Daily and nominated for a Pushcart Prize, her first book, "Accompaniments" is short stories, inspired by a collection of photographs of St Petersburg, and was published by Red Hook Editions in the Spring of 2017. Presently she teaches young writers in the Language & Thinking Program at Bard College and in the Liberty LEADS program at the Bank Street College of Education. This piece was inspired by the work of her friend and collaborator, the artist Laura F. Gibellini from Madrid, whose work for the MTA Arts for Transit Project can be seen at the Fresh Pond stop of the M train.

SUMMER READING AT THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY



Summer Reading at the Library

It might not be a challenge to feel that reading can build a better world but it can certainly be a challenge to articulate. Along with an annual reading challenge, the Library holds an essay writing contest. This year's question "How does reading build a better world?" elicited imaginative responses from children and teens from across the city. We hope you enjoy their ideas as much as we did.

The Power of Books

Sunay Chawla



Most readers like me are into books so much that sometimes we laugh and other times we cry with the characters. We really feel their emotions. This is the stage where most teachers tell their students they are now “true readers.” But what if there was a stage before becoming a true reader, sort of like the stage before becoming an adult butterfly? Being immersed in a story is just a cocoon, and the caterpillar (the reader) is still young. The reader has not achieved the adult stage yet. So, what is this final stage? It is simple. The reader has to understand the power of books and harness the power into the mind. Not only will the reader be inspired and see some historical problems to learn from, but now he has achieved

reading greatness. The reader has earned and achieved the adult butterfly stage. He has become a true reader and now he can fly.

Books inspire people to do great things. When I first harnessed the energy of books, I had no idea how to control the feeling that washed over me. So I fell into the vortex of my mind, reaching hundreds of miles down. Just as I thought my imagination would not spare me, I felt a flicker of energy feed my wings and I flew. I flew to the top. When I came to my senses, I observed how much books stimulated me. The influence of what I was reading not only fed me energy and motivated me, but gave strength to some great world leaders to take bold steps on behalf of their people. For example, Pandit Jawarlal Nehru, a freedom fighter in Indian history, read *Passage to Liberty* by A. Kenneth Ciongoli that showed the struggles the Italians faced while getting independence, how Italians fought back, and how they prevailed. Pandit Nehru was greatly inspired by the Italians, and the idea of overthrowing British rule was conceived. After listening to the speeches of Pandit Nehru, local Indians joined together to make a club that slowly formed into a society, and finally an army of over a hundred thousand people. Like the Italians, Pandit Nehru

and his army struggled, but India became an independent country at midnight on August 15, 1947.

Another freedom fighter fed and enthused by the power of books was Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela. Mandela was moved by an autobiography of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi known to the world as Mahatma Gandhi. Mahatma Gandhi's autobiography described his ways of *satyagraha* also known as the concept of passive political resistance. This helped Mandela object against apartheid in South Africa. "While Nelson Mandela is the father of South Africa, Mahatma Gandhi is our grandfather," states Harris Majeke, South Africa's former ambassador to India. Mandela is among many leaders around the world who have been inspired by Gandhi's Satyagraha campaign that Gandhi advocated in his book. This campaign or concept inspired the African National Congress to protest in a nonviolent way against apartheid.

As you can see, the books mentioned above inspired historical leaders to fight for freedom for their people and the ideas were ignited by just reading! This has been the influence that books have had in the past and will continue to have in the future. Books truly can make the world a better place. They also give you the power to extend your one beautiful wing out of the tightly wound cocoon to show the world you are ready. You are ready to be the independent butterfly that seeks out nectar. You are ready to change the

world and leave your mark.



Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelley and His Circle, The New York Public Library. "The Good Child." *The New York Public Library Digital Collections*.

Thomas Loverdi

Ever since I was a little kid hitting off a tee in Westerleigh Staten Island, New York I've been a Yankees fan I love baseball and as well I read to keep me entertained and up to date with the sports world. I have read many books about baseball from autobiographies to sports magazines to reading stats of past Yankee games. After school I would go to the New York Public Library which was the place where I would look for sports books in the book section and as well other nonfiction history books to teach me and help me learn throughout grammar I also learned about great pitchers such as Doc Gooden and other great players like Derek Jeter and Babe Ruth as well as Mickey Mantle, Joe DiMaggio, Lou Gehrig and grew up watching the Yankees players like Derek Jeter and Brett Gardner help push me to strive for greatness to help me achieve my dream of being a major league baseball player one day.

Going to the library and meeting new friends was so much fun and I couldn't wait to go after school to read and hope any books or magazines ended up in the sports section. If not I went on a computer (with the help from a librarian) I would google box scores of Yankee games. I also would read on American history and presidents such as George Washington and others such as Abraham

Lincoln helped increase my vocabulary which helped me excel in my studies and learn about our great country that we live in today.

I feel that reading can have a positive impact on our society. I think that reading a little a day if it's a chapter in a book or a new paper article can help you learn something if its increasing vocab or learning a stat of a player or hitting tips or learning new pitches. And I don't think age matters just find a book you like or a genre and it can help you learn. I've read many very good pitching books on how to throw curves or how to be a more accurate pitcher and a better hitter and position player.

In conclusion I think reading can help make the world a better place and can help you learn and help teach you as it speaks to you through the page. If it's a small book or a big book non-fiction or fiction or even a poem reading can help you if its vocabulary or a sport it will help you in someway.

#READERSUNITE

How Can Reading Help Build A Better World?

Khandker Shafwan

Age 7

Reading is the foundation of our world. Without reading, it would be near impossible to complete tasks as simple as reading instructions from a lab manual, reading the news, messaging friends and much more. In a globally changing world full of the latest technology, it is important for us not to allow the importance of reading to be diminished from our lives. Reading can help build an even better world as it allows us to gain a stronger education, share experiences and get us ready for adult life. Reading can help build a better world, and it all begins with us.

Reading can help give us a good education because we can learn many things by reading. For example, non-fiction books can teach us about animals, objects and our bodies. If one is interested in reading and wants to read about animals, one has to understand or one won't know lots of facts about animals. Another reason reading can give us a good education is because it can help one in life. For example, if a little boy uses something children definitely should not touch, he can get hurt. For this reason, children can read books about how to be safe. Finally, reading gives everyone a higher education because at school, teachers teach

strategies in reading and how to read with more stamina. Teachers also break down difficult vocabulary if necessary.

Reading allows us to share experiences and learn because everyone has different ideas and opinions. We can also share experiences by telling a little summary to our partners. Understanding is also important. It is a big part of reading because if we just read and don't understand, we cannot learn or share experiences. I can share my experiences about a book called, "How do Hot Air Balloons Work?" I learned that a balloon basket can hold tanks with fuel, so I can teach my friends more about this subject. When I share my experiences, I usually talk about my predictions, questions and thoughts and ask if my partner can help me clarify a line. Also, when we talk about one idea, we delve deeper into other possible hidden meanings. We sometimes consider the moral of the story and other important questions, all in an effort to understand the true essence of the author's writing.

Reading can help prepare us for adult life because we will know how to read. We will know how to stop when there is a period, exclamation point, comma or question mark. When we grow older, we will also read newspapers like the

New York Times, which usually contain harder language. Reading can help us improve our writing in adult life, since we will have read about and know more sophisticated vocabulary, which will set us apart from the average writer. If one knows more vocabulary, one will also tend to challenge oneself, which will make him/her more successful in life. Finally, reading will help us become smarter. When I attend high school in the future, classes will get much harder and I can use reading strategies I learned when I was young to make the transition much easier.

Ultimately, reading is an important cornerstone in our lives. It allows us to become smarter and more ready for later life. From there, we can collectively build a better world, where more and more people are enthusiastic about reading. As Dr. Seuss once said, "The more you read, the more things you will know. The more you learn, the more places you will go."

NYPL Summer Reading Challenge

Lisandra Rivera

In the words of one of my most favorite authors Dr. Seuss, “Reading can take you places where you have never been before. “When reading one can forget about everything surrounding them in life, whether it is good or bad. Reading allows you to input yourself in a place where you feel relaxed and calm, somewhat like another dimension just for you and the characters of the story. Reading can make you feel connected to many things in your life or make you remember things from your life, again, good or bad. But with this concept, it is all about the kind of reader that you are. There is even a book called “How to Make the World a Better Place: A Guide to Doing Good” by Herman Khan.

Let’s start off with the fact that reading can improve your friendships. One of my favorite reasons to visit the New York Public Library almost every week is because I make new reading-buds that have the same interest in books as me. A new very interesting way to make online book friends is by going on YouTube (BookTube) and watch encouraging “BookTubers” address all genres of stories, records books that they look forward to reading or would never read at all, and do all sorts of tags that are related to books. This

is another way you can make reading-buds from all over the world that has the same interest as you. Looking throughout the comments of videos I can find people who have the same point-of-view as me about the video. Some of my favorite BookTubers are PersueProject, ReadbyZoe, and Abookutopia, just to name a few. Hobnobbing and meeting with different people can simply help build a better world by derogating negative beliefs on different cultural status, stereotypical thoughts, etc.

I consider myself a hardworking student who is devoted to learning and exploring. This is why when I notice my family or friends on their mobile devices for a long period of time I try my hardest to distract them with a conversation or game. When too many peoples interest is on social media posts, game applications, online videos, and blogs, it is hard to have a decent conversation with them without them “quickly responding to a text message” or “checking a certain celebrity or friends new post.” For example, too much time on your mobile device can cause you to contradict yourself over how beautiful or original you are after looking at a super models post. This brings negativity into the world and human on human hate. However, reading changes this. Reading has no requirements

or limits to it and that's why it is so great! You don't need anything but your imagination when you are reading! There are currently 7.2 billion people in the world and if we were to all pick up a book and read, there would be no crime, world hate, or domination because we would be too content and busy reading!

Some of the world's greatest humanitarians became the leaders they are today because of reading! The research they did on the issues they fought for or against pushed them to take the steps they did in becoming the helping hands that the world needs. For example, last month my little brother and I read a book about Associate Sonia Sotomayor. Ms. Sotomayor was born to poor Puerto Rican parents in the projects of the Bronx. Sonia loved to read. Any chance she had she was reading the newspaper, the encyclopedia, and as a young child she loved the Nancy Drew mysteries (which encouraged her to one day be a judge). Her usual hangout spots was the library and her dinner table for meetings with club friends. Growing up Sonia didn't know about Barnes and Nobles or bookstores but just knew what her future goals were and just how to achieve them. Without many advances, Sonia graduated from Princeton College going on to law school. Today Ms. Sotomayor is very successful and still remembers how reading transformed her life to success. Similar to a point I made before, reading has made the world a better

place because there are no requirements to read! You can be apart of the wealthiest population in the world or be from the lowest income population and you still have access to the same words! For both sets of the population, reading is their way out of the real world and into their imagination where whatever is going on at the moment can be forgotten for just a short while. For instance, suppose Jennifer Gates (Bill Gates daughter) reads the book "Everything Everything" and enjoys every single moment of it. Just because I am from a very low-income family does not mean that the lines I'm reading are different. This makes the world so much better knowing that just because my family is not worth 89.8 billion dollars, low-income families are reading the same material as the wealthiest families in the world!

When reading, you put yourself in a whole other place forgetting all of your emotions. When you pick up a book its like dreaming with your eyes open. Reading can change the world for sure. Big foundation owners and role models like Oprah Winfrey and Lebron James would have never been as successful as they are today if it wasn't for reading so much as a child! So if we can all help build a better world with reading this world would have even better role models for the younger children! I encourage you to help out too!

Books Help Build A Better World

Penelope Pressman

Age 10

Books help the world in many different ways. No matter your age they have a huge impact on your life. Books give us a way to learn while still having fun. When we read books, they give us many ideas and educate us about the world around us. Books inspire people to change the world and make a difference. Books inspire me every day.

Many people do not like learning new things at school or at home. However, books make learning into an adventure with the characters of the book. You dive into an interesting story and you do not even realize how much it is teaching you. I have learned many things from books, and they teach me things I have never learned about at school or at home. For example, I read a book about Europe at home, and I learned lots of cool new things that I had never learned about at school! Even teachers read books to learn how to teach, which helps educate people. I would probably not want to sit around all day listening to facts about a topic, but books turn that topic into a world of information, imagination, and a sometimes, fun story too! Books teach us how to be empathetic by showing us different points of view. When you read a book, you use your imagination to picture the scene. You may not realize

it, but that is helping your body learn to use your imagination. Also, when you read you are practicing your language skills. If you read something, you will probably be able to pronounce it better later, or vice versa. I did not like learning nearly as much as I do now, until I realized how amazingly fun and awesome books are. Reading is now my favorite activity in the world, by far! It is way more fun than things like watching television, and it teaches us lots of interesting things that you might not find anywhere else. I cannot even imagine what life would be like without books around us.

The world around us is a very complex thing. There is so much to learn that you can never learn all of it. But, you can learn a lot. Books teach us about many things that are going on around us, and what was going around us before we, or even our parents and grandparents, were born. That is called non-fiction. However, there is also historical fiction. That is when a book is based on something like a time-period or an event that happened but, the story and/or the characters are not real.

Nonfiction and historical fiction help the world because it educates us about people who have helped the world and, in other books, teaches us about what is going on and how we can help.

I have discovered many ideas of how to make a difference from books like *Warriors*, where I learned how to find the root of a problem and tackle it from there. Books like *Wonder*, where I learned how to be empathetic when it showed me different points of view, and where I got ideas about raising money for charity. Books like *The Fourteenth Goldfish*, which motivated me to learn more about science so that when I am older I can help cure diseases that are hurting the human population as an immunologist. And, *Women in Science*, which inspired me because it reminded me that male and female rights are still not equal in many parts of the world. These are just a few books in a world of thousands, but even one book can educate us about what is going on in our lives and the lives of others.

Many people have been inspired by books. For example, me. I love books, and every day when I read, the book I am reading encourages me to do different things, especially nonfiction and historical fiction. Without books, many of our lives would be very different, mainly in bad ways. Without books, we do not have ways to pass on traditions and stories down to different generations. Because of that we would lose many important pieces of literature. In fact, there would not be literature! That would be horrible. Luckily, books are always there to help at libraries, book stores and more.

In conclusion, the world is a much better place with all the books around us. They help us teach

and pass on traditions. They create a fun way to learn and grow. They give us ideas. And, of course, they inspire us. I need books and I know that everyone else does too.

Page 1 of 3

Joaquín González
Age: 6.10 yrs old

7/30/17
Rose E. Scala P.S.71

How can the book I'm reading - and books in general help make the world a better place?

The book that I'm reading right now is Cristiano Ronaldo - The Rise of a Winner, by Frank Herbert.

This book can help make the world a better place if the people who read it understand its message which is that even if you have difficult situations in your life, if you keep trying and never give up, your dreams can come true. This book is a real life story of a humble boy from Madeira, Portugal and how he became one of the world's best soccer players.

The author, Frank Herbert wrote about a boy who learned to play soccer in the streets of Madeira and had very little, but still made it to the top. He faced many struggles in his life: bullying, school problems, his father's death, poverty, and stress, but that didn't stop him, he still became successful, the best soccer player in the world. The idea of writing about Cristiano's life can encourage people not to give up on their dreams, even if they

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have a lot of struggles. After reading this book the readers can learn that anything is possible because out of something small with disadvantages and only a kid's passion for soccer something very big happened. Cristiano Ronaldo, The Sultan Of The Stepover, forward for Real Madrid: an example of how dreams can come true no matter what you've been through or how your life starts. That's why you should never underestimate a kid's passion. People, especially children, can be inspired by this book and maybe become a famous author, soccer player, or anything that they want to be and keep pursuing that dream. It will not only help the person or child who reads the book but it'll help the world become a better place, because more and more people can be inspired by stories like this and receive the energy of trying their best. In a world like that, crime would stop, wars would end, because people would be focusing on positive thoughts and actions and there would be no negative energy. Ronaldo found his happiness through soccer even in the darkest of times. Like professor Dumbledore said in Harry Potter

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and the Prisoner of Azkaban, by J.K. Rowling, another book that I'm reading. "Happiness can be found even in the darkest of times if one remembers to turn on the light". I want to become the best soccer player in the world and by reading the Ronaldo book I learned that even if I fail scoring a goal or get injured, I'm still not going to give up.

When a person is reading they aren't doing negative things like fighting or being lazy. When a person reads they learn something new, like a life lesson, an inspiration, history or even a new word. These are a few examples of how any book can change the world. Books can change negative actions into positive ones.

Who wouldn't want to live in a world where all people are more diligent, inspired, and positive?

Read more, learn more!

By: Joaquin González

Age: 10

Phone: 646-626-0117

Nearest Branch Library: Pelham Bay



Art in the City

Of course reading is not the only way to build a better world and for many New Yorkers art is the preferred medium. Whether through painting, photography or collage, art can speak volumes. The following pieces reflect both the world our patrons see and the world they would like to see.

Art and Picture Collection, The New York Public Library. "John Brookings Studio." The New York Public Library Digital Collections. 1873.

“Dream Cloud”

Mecca Alim

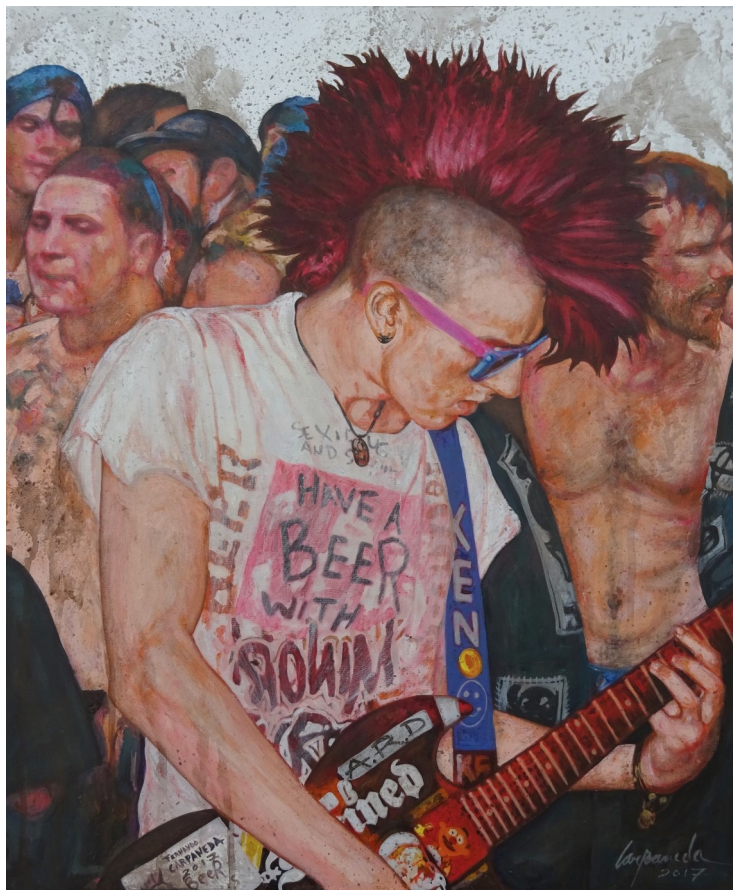
“Experimenting using digital software I don’t use all that much. I tried to employ a digital oil painting technique.”



“KEN”

Fernando Carpaneda

Acrylic on Canvas



“Resurrecting a Garden Entity”

Mecca Alim

This piece was originally created as a response to the frequent vandalism of plant life throughout my neighborhood. If we all worked together instead of tearing each other down, the world would be a happier place. Here, residents of a community work together to resurrect a fallen garden spirit.



“Punk Island ”

Fernando Carpaneda



"12 Weeks of Winter"

Antonio Rodriguez

That first NYC winter was hard. My sun soaked Texan brain could not comprehend the intense, wholly consuming cold. Worse yet the creative parts of my brain seemed to flee into hibernation. I created very little, no music, no writing and only a handful of photographs that I hemmed and hawed over. It took a long time to cut it down to 12. that number seemed right. One for each week of winter. I kept looking at them, editing them, deleting my edits and starting again. I think maybe I was trying to find a way to protect myself from December.



"12 Weeks of Winter"

Antonio Rodriguez



“Colored Victory”

Mecca Alim

“The digitally colored version of my Victory. This piece represents finally achieving a perfect utopia. I wanted to be as colorful as possible in this one and had fun shading and painting.”

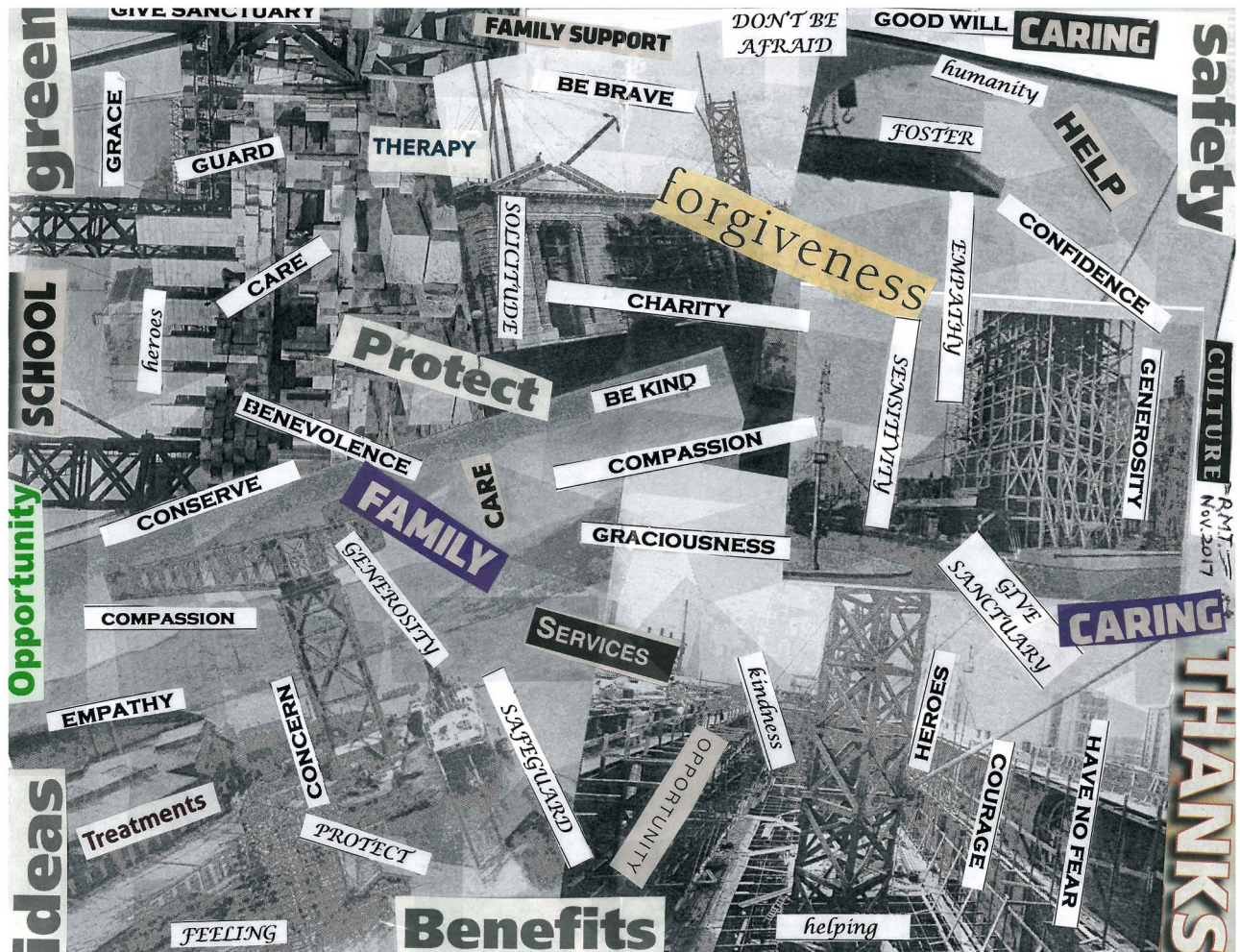


“CBGB”

Fernando Carpaneda



*"My original artwork: Collage, 8.5" by 11" - **"Build a Better World"** - consisting of 6 "construction"-themed public-domain images obtained from <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org> (searched and found with with filter "public-domain-only"), plus words of different fonts and sizes cut and attached/taped from newspapers as well as self-printed words (for the ones I wasn't able to find in newspaper headlines) "*



Mecca Alim is a Bronx-based artist whose current body of work concentrates on characters in a world free from every form of bigotry and discrimination that impact the societies we live in. She has exhibited her art in galleries and establishments such as The Holy Apostles Gallery in Chelsea, Patria NJ in New Jersey, Backstreet Gallery in New Rochelle, Greenpoint Gallery in Brooklyn, The Harlem School of The Arts, and more. Mecca graduated summa cum laude from The College of Westchester before transferring to The College of New Rochelle, where she presented her solo thesis exhibition. She is currently a teaching artist at the Harlem School of the Arts.

Fernando Carpaneda is an underground punk artist. He works with clay sculptures and paintings. His main theme is always the human being. His sculptures and paintings capture subjects that reflect the extraordinary side of the human element. Homeless people, punk rockers, pop stars, unknown artists and outcasts are recreated to the minutest detail in his sculptures and paintings.

Antonio Rodriguez is a Mestizo-Tejano Artist committed to bringing POC and LGBTQ+ perspectives to the fore. A San Antonio native he now lives with his wife, dog, and cat in Brooklyn, NY. Mediums include but are not limited to: Poetry, Documentary Film, Photography, Music, Criticism, Zines, and Community Organizing.

R.M. Trenkler-Thomson emigrated from Germany to the Bronx, New York, more than 20 years ago. After a long career in information technology, he recently began attending arts and crafts workshops as well as writing circle groups and classes at several New York Public Library branches and the Bronx Council on the Arts' Bronx Writers Center.

The Innovation Project's mission is to expand our horizons by surfacing and supporting staff ideas and creativity throughout NYPL. We aim to break down barriers, to imagine the impossible, to support and encourage each other, and to create a culture of "Yes! Let's try that!"

The Innovation Project is part of an innovation landscape at NYPL which, along with the Innovation Communities, provides pathways for exploration and experimentation with the aim of improving our programs, services, and processes in ways that advance our mission and strategic priorities. NYPL staff bring smart, creative expertise to their roles in every corner of our organization and are often closest to understanding what innovative ideas might align with that aim. If you are a staff member with an innovative idea, this project can help bring it to life.

The Innovation Project Team is made up of staff from across the Library, including past awardees, to ensure representation of the entire system. All staff will have a voice in the process, by submitting their ideas, voting, or both. Also importantly, this process will expose staff to each other's projects, which we hope will in turn spark more ideas and conversation across the system.

MEET OUR EDITORS

Four librarians came together with the idea to start a publication that celebrates the artistry of the New York citizens they, and other library staff, serve. They applied for and won The New York Public Library's 2017 Innovation Project, which is made possible by a generous grant from the Charles H. Revson Foundation.

Tabrizia Jones is a Young Adult Librarian in the Bronx. As someone who was born and raised in the Bronx, she has seen great things that makes New York a creative and vibrant city and what way to display that creativity in a magazine that celebrates New York! Tabrizia has participated with literary magazines and newspapers in high school, working on them and submitting to them. In her spare time, she loves to write, both short stories and poems, do art, and of course, read!

Karen Loder is a librarian for the adults at her Bronx community's library where she promotes reading and writing and learning because she loves those three things! Throughout high school and college, Karen has participated with literary magazines either by working for or submitting to them. She thinks this one is particularly special since here she can show off the super talented patrons who attend her writing workshops. To Karen, New York City represents much of what the Library does: freedom to express and explore oneself and one's world in a vibrant, nurturing, and diverse community. Unlike the Library, however, NYC is expensive. She thanks you for your interest in this publication and asks that you continue to support the library and the amazing people who shape it.

Whitney Davidson-Rhodes is a Young Adult Librarian in the Bronx. Though an upstate transplant, she's found a home in this bustling big city. Whitney was previously on an art gallery committee that showcased original work from LGBTQ artists from the tri-state area. With a background and passion in art and literature, she's always wanted to produce work that showed off the talents of the people in her community. She's lucky to have found three other people who shared the same goals.

Adena Gruskin is a Young Adult Librarian in the Bronx. While she has been published before this is her first time working on a Zine and she is very excited to get to see her fellow New Yorkers creativity first hand. An avid reader and writer, Adena is thrilled to have the opportunity to work on this zine with colleagues who share her passions. She is particularly excited about this project because it provides a showcase for our talented patrons and beautiful city.

Next Issue:



Calling All Writers!

Get Published in Issue 3 of Library Zine

We call for the distinct and creative voices of our patrons to submit their poetry, short stories, essays, and original artwork for our second issue.

This issue's theme: **All Are Welcome**

This issue shares its theme with the Library's mission: all are welcome to the library. We are looking for inventive and creative takes on this theme which inspires reflections on community, construction, social awareness, and education. Do not take this theme literally; build your own interpretation! Make sure to stand out from the crowd and make your title unique to your work.

Submission Deadline:
March 1, 2018

All ages and languages are welcome to submit!

Manuscripts

All written manuscripts **must be typed** in 12-point font with one-inch margins, and checked for spelling and grammar. At the top of your submission, please include your name, address, primary phone number, and email.

Poetry should be single-spaced and not exceed 1,000 words.

Short stories can be 500-2,500 words, about 2-10 pages double-spaced.

Non-fiction and essays should not exceed 2,500 words, about 10 pages double-spaced.

Manuscripts must be in .doc or .docx format, and/or readable in Google Drive and/or Microsoft Word.

Submissions can be written in any language.

Artwork and photography

Physical copies of artwork (e.g. paintings, sculptures, etc.) or photos will not be accepted. Instead, **take a picture or scan your work** into one of the following formats: .JPG/JPEG, .TIFF, and .PNG. Images must be 300 pixels per inch (PPI). Images containing nudity will not be accepted.

Along with your image, attach a separate Word document with a description of your work and a short anecdote of what inspired the work.

Please Be Aware

While Library Zine does not want to limit our patrons' creativity, be aware that this publication is intended for **all** audiences. Submissions must be mindful of language, the use of graphic violence and abuse, and the depiction of harmful stereotypes based on age, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and mental/physical disabilities.

Limit of 5 submissions per person.

Please submit your work by submitting to our email address, nyplzine@nypl.org.
We will send you a consent form after we successfully received your submission.