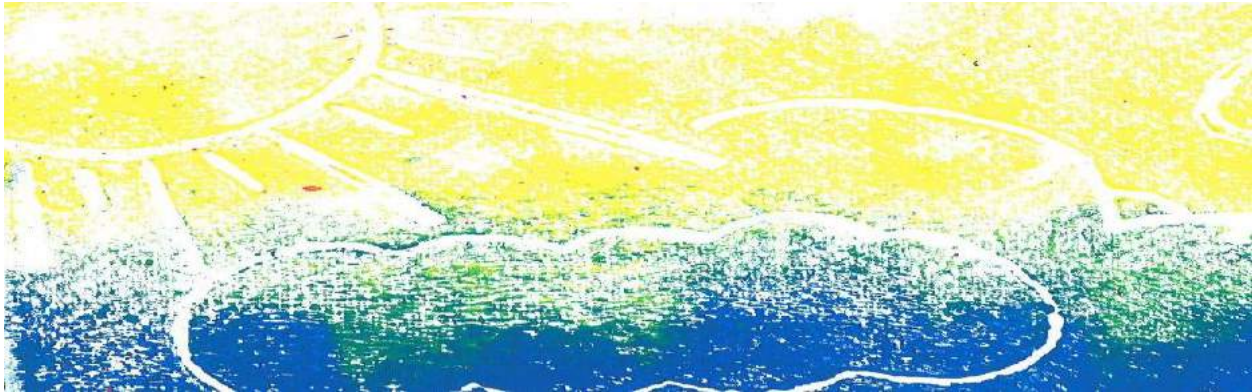


# Healing Elements



Lemuel Shattuck Hospital

Poetry Workshops

Spring 2016

Sponsored by Shattuck Partners Inc. and the Museum of the National Center of Afro American Artists

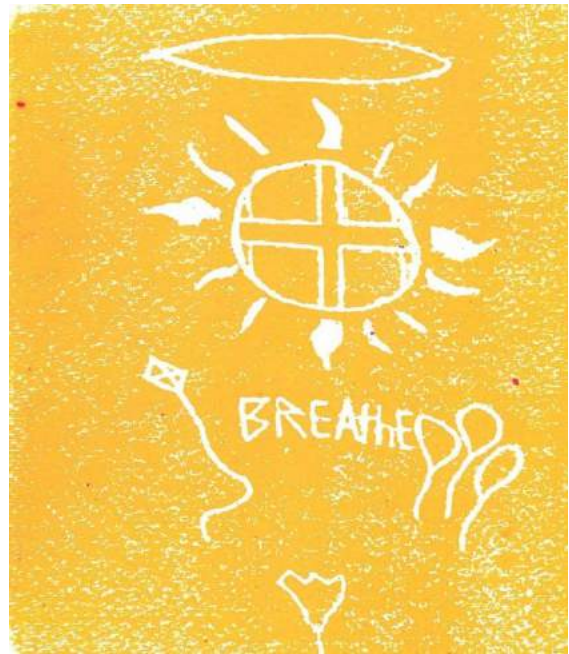
*Water*

My thoughts pound in my head  
Like waves crashing on the beach  
Sometimes they are calm but  
Often they are strong.

I wish my journey was  
Like a lazy river,  
But instead it is a violent  
Storm out at sea.

I need to navigate through this storm  
Because there is always sunshine  
After a storm.

*-Sarah C.*



*The Wind*

I am the wind,  
I like to go around the world  
To see all of the bright lights of the town and city.  
It is cold and sometimes warm.  
It feels good on my face and body.  
The wind has no color,  
But if I had to choose it would be powder blue  
And sometimes it could be sky blue.  
The wind is light bright and cool  
It can be very pretty and sometimes can make you cry.

*--Maria M.*

*Untitled*

Technicolor dreams  
A plethora of shades  
A kaleidoscope of cash on the fringe

You can almost taste it

You run but you can't hide  
Dreams fade away  
But love is a constant

*--James R.*

*Tornado*  
*--Kristin B*

I'm a tornado in the gray windy sky  
Wiping all the life away as I fly by  
Wishing it would all go away

Now rebuild back up and hope this will stay  
So day by night just try to be strong  
And pray every day for the tornado to stay away

*Sharks*

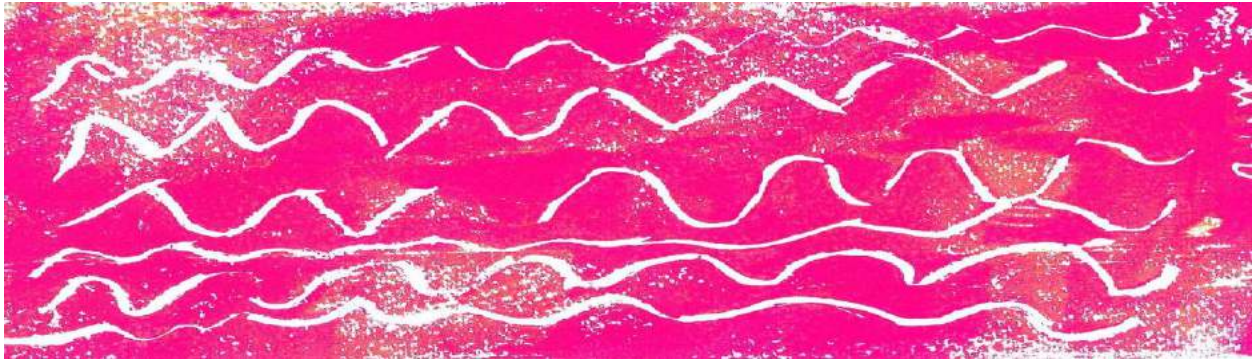
Sharks are mysterious  
Sharks have killer instincts  
Sharks are great hunters  
Sharks have bloody meals  
Sharks have eyes that can see through all shades of color in the ocean

*--Kevin*

*The Ocean*

As mysterious as the ocean  
Deep as the sea  
As the beautiful exotic ocean  
I'm finally free.  
Deep as the waters  
As salted as the sea  
I feel so alive again  
Just like all the creatures  
Happy and free.  
Deep as the waters  
But free of this nightmare  
My life has been with drugs  
I'm worth it now I know  
But sometimes I'm so down  
That low is as far as I can go

*--Nada*



*Haikus for Wind & Rain*

Wind creates chaos  
Rain brings on the calming sense  
We see the beauty in all

*--Jenny*

I am howling  
Love is beautiful and intense  
I feel the droplets

*--Julie*

Motion of the air  
A frightful howling force  
Nature's best weapon

Rustling of leaves  
The forest dances tonight  
The wind pulls the strings

Cool, refreshing breeze  
Blowing from the horizon  
Clouds gather beyond

Meaningless babble  
It's content falls on deaf ears  
Your words are wind

*--Peter B.*

This wind is breezy  
It's relaxing but whistling  
This force is howling

*--Nada*

Calm wind on my skin  
It will change so hot and quick  
So calm on my skin

*--Ray*

Wind is cold, hot, wet  
Humid, misty, feels so good  
Additionally, can change

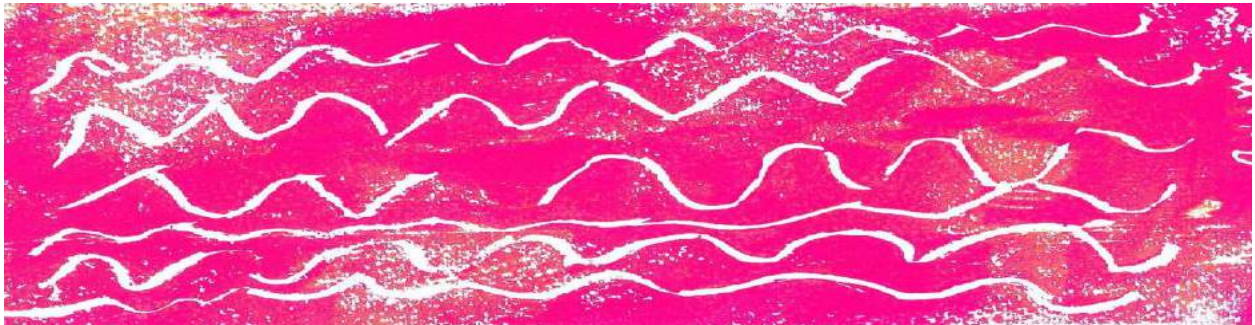
*--Kevin D.*

I heard the whisper  
Through the window  
Of the lonely widower

*--William*

Breaks into silence  
As gusty winds move swiftly  
My heart pound softly

*--L'Merchie*



*Poems of Fire & Water*

Fire  
Applied to pipes with water inside  
I make a room steamy and warm  
But within a man and woman I burn  
Like a beacon of hope  
Lighting up the darkness forever  
That dwells within those lost

*--Yan*

If I became the fire I would yearn for a certain time.

My rage would be continuous  
But eventually I would have to stop  
Because I would burn through everything.

With nothing left in my dominion,  
I would have to stop screaming and causing terror  
Like the words out of a dragon's mouth.  
Where would I live if I burnt my home?

You should not throw stones if you live in a glass house, a man told me.

Sixteen years ago, I was burned with no ancestors or offspring.  
I dwell alone and anticipate the calmness of the water.

*--William*

My feet burn as I remove my shoes  
Reminding me of all my pains  
They sink as I walk toward the calming breeze  
The taste of salt in my mouth  
The sound of birds chirping  
The cool ocean hits my toes  
Removing the burning feeling  
Suddenly my mind is at ease  
From the sound of the waves breaking  
It goes through my body  
Calming thoughts arise  
I am taken to a new world  
The pains of reality drift away  
And are taken out to sea.

*--Kristin*



Fire is passion  
Fire is desire  
The heat of two lovers  
The flame that encompasses success  
Fire is patience

--Louie

### *Heroin*

Fire is hot and deadly  
Someone told me to try this fire  
Without fear, I put it into my arm  
I felt warmth flowing through my veins  
I loved that feeling

For years, playing with that fire  
I was never afraid of getting burned  
Until that fire was gone  
And death was what I longed for

--Julie P.

Fire is a bad place to be to me  
It can bring me up,  
It can bring me down

It came into my life and it feels to me  
It brought me to turn upside-down  
I am scared but happy to be there right now  
Fire is a negative and positive thing,  
But to me it hurts in a lot of ways.

To feel the fire going through my veins it was warm  
But also felt amazing in a certain way.  
It brought me to darkness, not lightness

--Sarah



Broken but inspired  
I lift my face  
To the sun  
I am life  
Eternal fire

--Janice C.

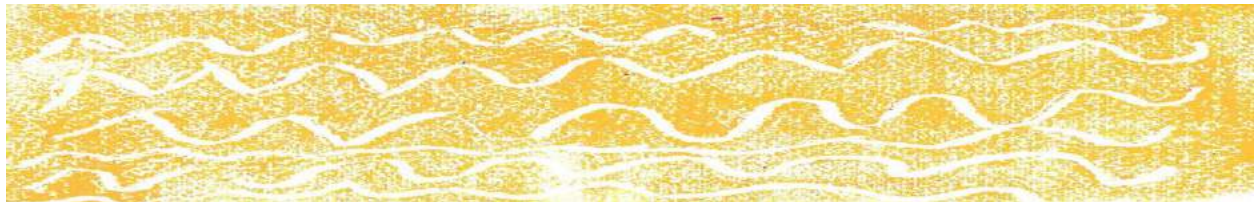
There was a fire in my soul when I was born  
My drug addiction had long put that out.

When I found the Lord, my flame was re-ignited.  
Now, as the days go by, the fire is rising

Fire can be negative, it can hurt, destroy.  
However, my new flame is lit to help appreciate, love.  
Fire can be what it is made to be.  
It can be awfully painful.  
It can be wonderfully motivating

My fire is finally used for positive.

-Cori A.



### *Haikus for Fire*

The fire in my soul  
Never fades, never dying  
Until the fight is over.

--Brenda

Raging fire consumes  
Ever engulfing bright coal  
Calm seeds regrowth beauty

--Bonnie P.



Brightening my life  
Fading killing my sight cold  
Fire I want to hold

--Jason P.

Fiery baby burn  
Golden child my heart's desire  
I long for your touch

--Nat R.

A blast of insight  
Burns away all the lies  
Now I see the truth

A burning candle  
Shadows flicker all around  
Darkness waits its turn

Wisdom's glowing flame  
Permeates my darkest depths  
Is this really me?

--Peter B.

### *Fire Pit*

Contained by a wall of granite  
The deep warmth climbing to the sky  
Laughter and love fills the perimeter of its presence

Like a blanket it hugs me  
Keeping me safe from the chill of the night  
As tired eyes make their way to bed  
Laughter and love fade under the moonlight

Eventually the embers calm down  
Finding peace in the night  
Having kept the atmosphere  
For another night

--Emily



*Untitled*

They say water puts out a fire  
But I've seen red dance on blue  
Growing higher and higher

They say I'm calm and cool,  
They don't see the fire  
But I've seen red dance on blue

A burning desire

*--Dasia*

*Profuse Overdoses the Fear*

Standing by a river  
Flaming in a fire  
Lookin' for a stone to skim  
Right, nice, flat, and mild.

Ballistics is no weapon  
Narcs not a game  
Drugs can be quite spewed and gushed forth  
Spit me out again.

Ain't none for an addict  
An employment position or job  
One has to be consistent, thorough, and  
Predictable to be employed.

*--Dorothy*



*Untitled*

Family is special,  
Love them everyday  
I keep them in my heart  
Even when they die and decay.  
Sad days are tough,  
The good days are well,  
Stay strong and keep up.

--John

*Seamstress*

The quilt of life surrounding us!  
Ever getting wider  
With the strips of new experience  
For every pain and sorrow  
The design of life's seamstress  
A web of mystery with life's thread

-- Louis

*Two Poems by Shirley*

If I was a banana  
I would be yellow  
I'd be wanted and loved  
I'd have that something  
That no one else has.

Always love bananas,  
There are others I like,  
But I take the banana.

*Relatives*

Relatives I need!  
Hope to see them soon  
Without my relatives I would be nothing  
I still go on loving them, even if they don't love me

Relatives make more relatives



*I am Glass*

Glass intertwined bestows me strength  
Which flows across my fragile length  
From out of chaos does order rise  
A truth most known among the wise  
A single strand will break for sure  
A bundle keeps the structure pure

--Pete B.

*O Eye Glasses*

Peering into life,  
It's not black or white  
The colors of love and hate,  
Blurring my sight

Teardrops clear my vision  
So I can turn darkness into light  
Flowers blooming in the shining sun  
Without you nothing is right

You make me see my sorrows  
Help my paint my pain  
With red and green and pink and blue  
A rainbow outta line

Only you can tell my child of time  
That I see her and she is all mine.

--Nat R.

*Lioness*

I'm living in a jungle  
The days are long,  
She is mighty, ferocious, fierce, and brave.

Fighting to stay alive  
My nights are cold  
Protecting her young through thick and thin

And I'm feeling so alone

--Brianna

*Parasite*

You're so warm  
Your tendrils touch with fiery kisses  
Each tip caresses my skin  
You are the embodiment of safety  
Your love fills me to the brim  
I slowly fall asleep in your embrace

My favorite parasite

Gorging on my morality  
I need you, I want you, I crave you  
I can't extract you from my veins  
Why did I let you in?  
If I could trap you in a box and seal the lid,  
I would

My favorite parasite

Once loved and cherished  
Now feared and despised  
I seek the light the warmth,  
The safe place you once put me  
I reach for the sun  
I pull myself up  
Face turned to the new warmth  
A fiery warmth without you  
I cut you out,

My favorite parasite

--*Natalie*

*Inspiration*

Your story alone

The struggle  
    The car,  
        The kids,  
            The husband,  
                The house  
                    The new mask you wear,

You own no more lies

--*Melanie*





*Poems of Healing & Safety*

*Blanky*

Going undercover I need it  
My bones are weary,  
My mind frayed  
I have to face the day,  
But I'd rather stay safe  
I can make it happen,  
Destroy my world,

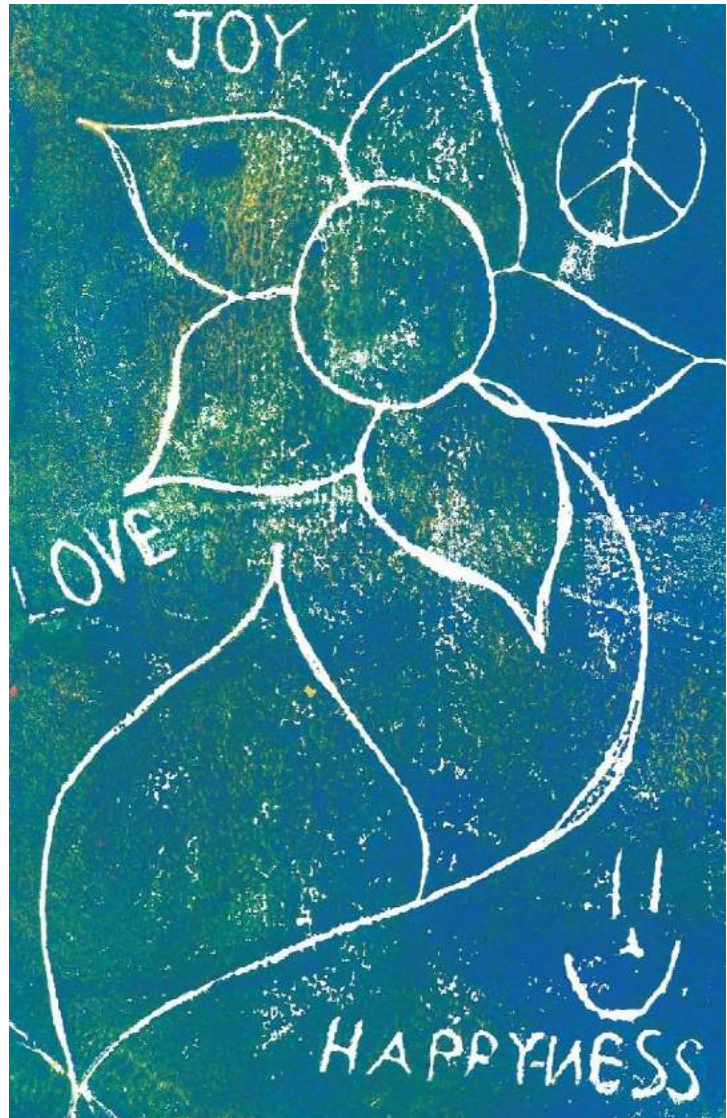
Oh the hurt

O.K. here we go  
I move my Blanky  
And feel the cold  
And know I'm old  
But later tonight  
I'll enter my cave  
With my blanket once more

I have to face the day  
But I'd rather stay safe  
I can make it happen  
Destroy my world

Oh the hurt

- Jason



*Safe*

Safe is warm blanket  
Safe is my mom and dad  
Safe are my children  
Safe is being around people  
Who love me

I wish I could be covered  
Like a blanket forever  
By these people

-Julie P.



*Healing*

Nothing could repair the damage that was caused?  
So how do I heal?  
Playing these wicked games that people play

I've lost an eye  
                  I've broken a bone  
                                  My chest crushed and pulverized

I blew the dust out of my palm  
And into the air  
Felt like my life was not fair

Of course the pain never went away  
Through the years I cried for days  
But I am healed or am I ...

Damn I need healing

*--William*

*Healing*

                  It's been 12 years  
                  I haven't healed  
          I've just learned how to deal and move on  
          I smile, I laugh, but I haven't healed  
          When I visit her it feels like yesterday  
          I haven't healed and it still hurts  
Today you would never know I haven't healed  
My scars are still open, no scab, no band aid  
          I still haven't healed yet.  
          I just learn how to move on.  
          But you would never know that.  
          That I haven't healed.

*--Elizabeth*

*Healing*

Love is healing.  
Fear is healing.  
Life is healing.  
Death is healing.

Life storms can be healing especially when your heart is involved,  
Your mind  
Your spirit.

Like a summer night's thunderstorm.

--Louie

*Healing*

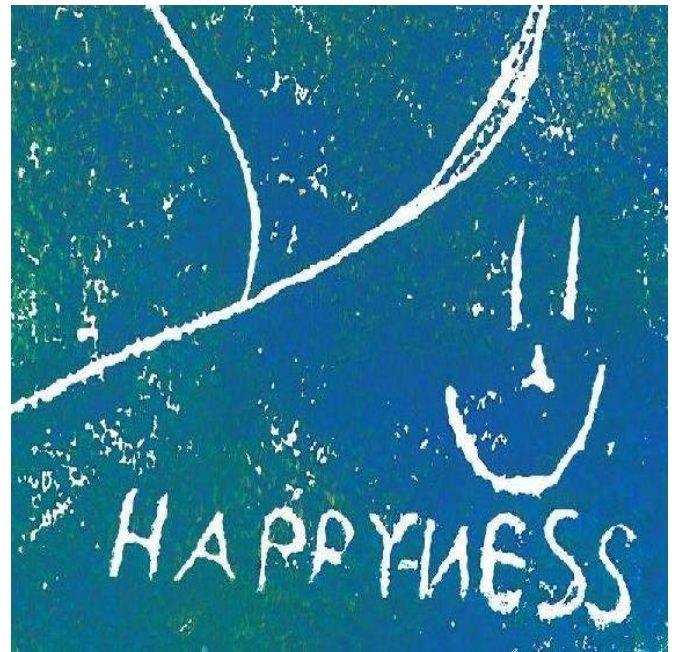
Healing takes time  
We want it fast  
It's amazing how we have it within us  
But we have to go slow  
Because you can heal wrong  
And forever be crooked

--Julie P.

*Healing*

Healing is hope  
Hope that one day everything will be alright  
Healing is change  
Change for the better  
What comes along with healing is fear  
Fear about what is to come next  
  
Healing must come from deep within yourself  
  
Healing is believing  
Believing what is best for you  
Healing is like waves on an ocean  
The waves are like your thoughts

--Brenda



*Untitled*

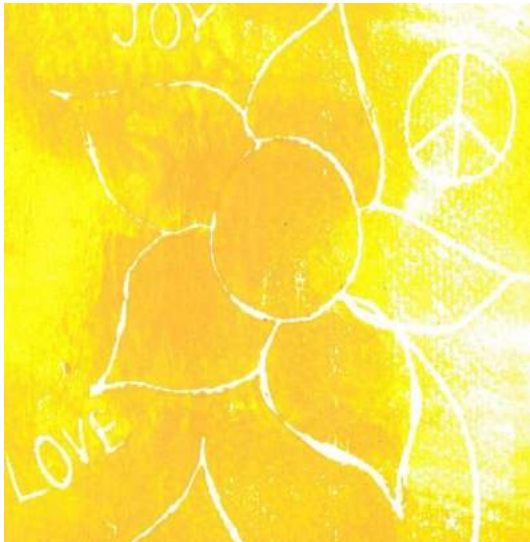
I used to enjoy my innocence  
Until it was taken away from me  
Like a river, it flows.

I wish one day I could bring it back.  
So I could laugh again  
And be the way I used to be – happy

I still cry at night and yell, too

I hope for a good life one day  
I am working it out  
It's going to take time to get there

- Marie M.



-Tanika

Safe inside this box  
Safe with all the locks  
Safe from my own distraction

What happens when I am released?  
What happens when the box unlocks?

Will I be safe?  
Or will I be back in the box  
That got me locked?

*Safety*

Safe for me is my dreams  
My family locked in my studio room  
Alone or in my secret garden  
Or with a horse that listens to me

--Julius

*Safe!*

Safe I should have kept you  
And I am sorry I'm not there  
I see you in my dreams at night  
And wish for you in my prayers

I should have been a better mother  
A better daughter,  
A better friend

I can only hope the hell my needle has brought me  
Has a happy end

*-Casey*



*Safe*

When I met him, I couldn't speak  
He was standing there  
I was heading for the door,  
Surprised, he said good-bye,  
He kissed my cheek

It would be a year before we met again.  
A lot had changed for us both since then

*--Jessica*

*Safe*

When I am safe  
I am protected  
I feel like anger keeps me safe  
So I respect it  
It's like a safety shield  
Around my body

*-John*



*Untitled*

Times are rough in my life  
But I turn that around to success

I listen to doctors  
And take my meds  
To relieve my stress

I'm an uncle so I should be happy often  
And not threaten people  
And saying do you want to die in a coffin.

*--John B.*

A dark painful past  
Burn it down and walk away  
I'll never look back

*--Peter B.*

*Poems of Water*

*Rain*

The rain is wonderful for the flowers and the plants  
Nourishes the animals and the humans  
Water is stronger than steel because it can wear down stone.

Water is life.  
    Water is death.  
        Water is soft.  
            Water is hard.  
                Water is gentle.  
                    Water is rough.

Can you describe water?

In hurricanes, water can cause havoc on land or on the sea  
On a nice summer day, water can bring coolness to a hot day.  
On a winter's day, water can bring snow.  
During harvest season, water can bring life.

--*Louie*

*Water*

Splashing waves surround the beach  
Water for miles so much to teach

Cleansing and pure and wet to the touch  
Amazing world below that can teach us so much

Standing on the edge  
Feet buried in the sea foam  
The waters so peaceful  
I never wish to go home

The depths of that water  
Can be so dark and scary  
No wonder so many people  
Remain extra wary

Splashing waves surround the beach  
Water for miles with so much to teach

--*Kathleen T.*





*Water*

Ocean to lake, blue to gray  
Water falling, encouraging rain  
Innate feelings, debilitating pain

The still waters calming  
And the stormy ocean swirling

The tides rolling in and out  
An overwhelming force causing drought  
Pulling you down deeper with the current  
Wishing the memories were a deterrent

*--Bonnie P.*

*A Dance for Water!*

My grandma dances in hopes that it will rain  
The water feeds the Earth and gives us what we need

She dances in hopes that it will rain.  
Seeds sprout and flowers bloom. Food is created.

My grandma dances in hopes that it will rain.  
The water from this rain will bless our land with many wonderful things

So my grandmother dances even after water rains...

*--Elizabeth*

*Water*

Salty or sweet it's life's cornerstone,  
Picture your home with no water?

Smelly and dry  
    And you try to survive  
                    Through a dried out day.

We all have a flower, tucked inside  
    Water just helps us thrive

In thought and emotion  
It's the simplest magic potion.

*--Jason P.*

*Tears*

The tears came from my eyes  
Then may turn into a big body of water  
    Some are salty or sweet  
        Tears of happiness  
        Tears make you laugh  
    It makes your heart fast and stronger

*--Maria*

*Untitled*

The sobering sound of the needle on the record  
The fastidious clatter as rain hits the glass  
Scratch, scratch, pitter, patter, splash  
The record shall play, the rain will fool.  
Mock, mock, pitter, patter, splash

*--James L.*

*Hopeful Oceans*

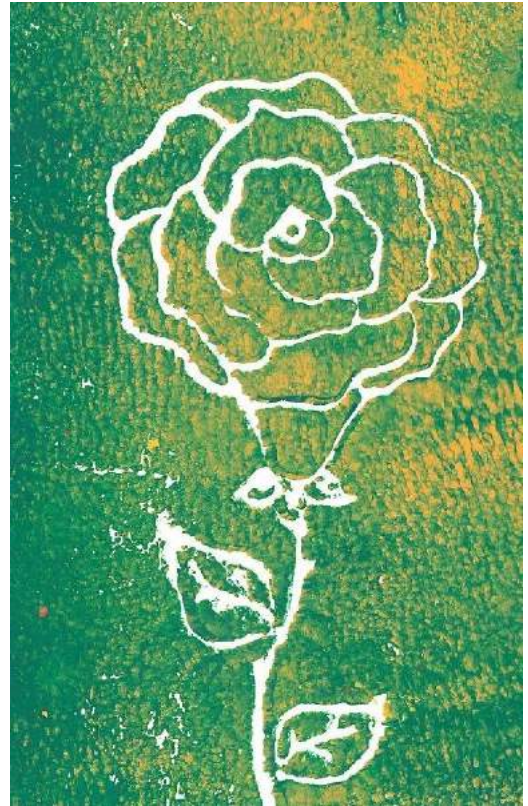
Will you be alright  
When you dream of home tonight  
Your plans are as vast as the ocean  
Sometimes we don't know what direction  
Amongst all the commotion

Please don't drown all your dreams  
Your hope is in the crashing waves  
I've seen your blue eyes cry, just want  
To have your smile come back and shine  
Like it used to, don't let it die

Don't let yourself sink,  
Please don't drink

Hope is the anchor to your soul

--Jenny B.



*Water*

Water sparkles blue  
It reflects the morning sun  
Water never ages  
It's a sign of rebirth

--Brenda

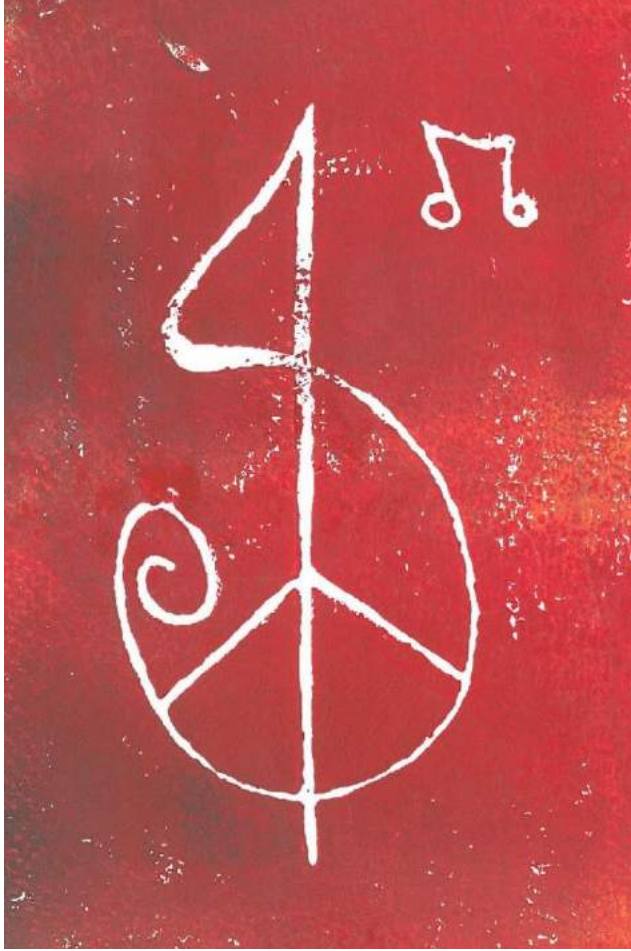
*Sweetheart*

I found my sweetheart in a faraway place.  
He was very sexy and far away

So when he walks toward me,  
He smiles and began to talk about his life.  
He didn't know who I was,  
But he told me that he would like to spend his life with me.

His eyes, bright and bold, a great big smile on his face.  
He told me that I was the woman for him

--Maria M.



*Ink & Lead*

I remember when I first held you –  
Helping me find the words I would not  
speak –  
Filling the emptiness of this paper –  
I held you up to the light...amazed  
Like blood that flowed from me through you

I fell in love with the many designs of you –  
I have put you down for a brief time –  
Silence...knowing you will always be mine.

Just me and my ink  
Just me and my lead.  
They tell you what's caged  
In my head.

I'm erasable with the pencil –  
Always permanent with the pen.

*-Elizabeth*

*Yellow/Spring*

The golden sun shines down  
    With its yellow rays beaming on the grass  
                                    To dry the morning dew.

*--Louie*



Shattuck Partners thanks the Poet Participants, poet/artist/instructor L'Merchie Frazier, psychology intern Caroline Byron, and project advisors Edmund Barry Gaither, Director of the Museum of the National Center of Afro-American Artists and Robert McMackin, Shattuck Hospital psychologist, for their participation in these workshops.