

## **NAMI NJ Expressive Arts – Poetry Showcase – October 2022**

### **A Picture to Paint**

**By Luca Duberstein**

I was down in my darkness feeling depressed  
People said to snap out of it, but I was trying my best.  
As a person I started to feel less and less  
The weight of my emotions being put to the test.  
I was thinking  
Will I be alone forever  
My life is getting harder  
Been an ongoing endeavor.  
Is there someone who will stop to listen and care  
“People stop walking by me  
While I’m alone on these stairs.”

My heart skipped a beat.  
Tripped up in the race.  
Some people assume that i’m okay  
Doesn’t means that is always the case  
Going downhill I was losing my pace  
I had full body shivers,  
I thought I was a disgrace.  
While I was on a single thread

I felt a little spark ignite.  
Now I don't have to be so nervous,  
I see a tunnel of light.  
Someone said they're proud  
Proud of me.  
And you know what I think?  
Yeah, I think they ought to be

This Can be thoughts  
Of someone's Mental Health  
Which  
Can be a big picture to paint  
Helping others who have it  
Should be a path to take  
Help someone to get out of their box  
Don't let their problems leave to fate  
Better someone's life  
Help their picture to paint

**Did You Not See Me When I Entered The Room**  
**By Vicki Harvey**

Did you not see me when I entered the room;  
Standing there all alone.

I saw those looks of repulsive thinking;  
Heard the voices of bitterness and dislike.

Felt those  
hot daggers;  
Stabbing me, burning me, hurting me and tearing me down.

Why doesn't it ever stop;  
The endless emotion of loneliness that seems like darkness in the night.

I was frozen, totally motionless;  
Not able to move as if I was caged in a bubble looking out.

My heart was pounding;  
And about to explode.

I'm afraid now of those things;  
The bits and pieces of life that I can not control.

I can not see them;  
But I know their are real.

Those feelings and voices;  
They keep surrounding me.

I'm standing lifeless; Hearing those whispers of despair, dislikes and shame.

I see those the ugly scares and dark stains;  
Blemishes of reproach and hopelessness.

I to wish for normalcy that is now questioned;  
Where is it, where has it gone, does it even exist.

I haven't seen it in such a long time;  
That place of peace, a gentle hand and kind words no longer visit me.

They have become like vapors disappearing into the atmosphere;  
And my confidence has followed into space.

I'm all alone standing here;

Did you not see me when I entered the room.

**My Soul Lingers**  
**By Kenya The Visionair Phillips**

My soul lingers when I feel the deep gravitation of the waters coming over me.

My soul lingers when, out of the darkened night, the full moon shines across the face of that human with the devil-scoped mask.

My soul lingers when I realize that too many carry no hope for tomorrow, and so few for the day, while others go through life in misery because of mistakes made yesterday.

My soul lingers when my highest peak is reached without gratitude or satisfaction.

My soul lingers when nature speaks to me and the only vision, I can conclude with that which is dead.

My soul lingers when I see dirt and then conclude with the puzzle of which we are made of, oh, sweet chemistry.

My soul lingers when I see water's, waves', and circles and notes that there is no ar in between, only passageways that lead to new dimensions.

My soul lingers when I stop and smell the coffee and realize black and brown just as people are so similar that they are often noted the same.

My soul lingers and will linger until these spirit-felt eyes are surrounded with the God blessed force- that which would unite one and make all whole.

By Kenya The Visionair Phillips

**The Bolted Door Of Ignorance**  
**By Patricia Cannon**

Philip would sing, “Sticks and stones may break my bones  
but words will never hurt me,” to bullies on the playground.  
Sadly, his verbal armor couldn’t protect his troubled mind  
and he would try to bandage his wounded heart with  
prescribed synthetic moons and therapy that helped him  
survive the endless night of his life. But when his mental  
illness is treated like a contagious disease it locks him  
inside a room of isolation where his cries of suffering  
are muffled behind the bolted door of ignorance.

**The drab Beauty**  
**By Sharon Ivanauskas**

The leaves rustle on the trees  
Shades of yellow, orange, red and brown.  
Torn, pitted, dimpled and dotted.

The wind, cold, harsh, pushing and pulling as it rushes through.  
Crinkling, shaking, rattling and hushed whispers.

Rain so soft, gentle, joining and swirling.  
Pressure, strength, bombarding the crispness.

The leaves amber, scarlet, nutmeg and maize.  
Warm, bold, shy, glistening and subtle.

Falling, gliding, up and down, side to side.  
Laying down, trodden, pushed, scrunched.

Looking on at the dirty cold leaves,  
Within they hold grace, beauty and uniqueness.

**Yes**  
**By Vivian Listner**

I make peace with myself, yes.

Abiding by my own rules...hell yeah.

It's not like I have to take this from people.

Yes, yes and more yes.

I stand up for myself and the mental health I have endured.

Yes.

Neither it nor myself will get in the way of others' opinions... hands-down.

I will endure nothing else...yes, but why do I feel excluded every time?

No.

No more information about myself is for being beaten up.

No right of others to shame or blame me.

And no, I am not a loser for it.

I make my own rules...piece by piece.

I fly ahead over the sun, to see it burst with the flames of love and empathy from those who love me. I store it in my hand. Keep it safe and locked away with a key. YES.

If storm clouds come get me, I will still rise...yes  
...and more yes.

I am worthy no matter what.

So, come get me, but I won't be home.

Yes.

Yes.

And... yes.



**You, and not only you**  
**By Michael Loberfeld**

The opposite of captivity is flight.  
By this time in your life, you have known both captivity and flight.  
You know the cage, and you know the sky.

**Your** flight will reveal **you**.  
You will put every label aside,  
overcome the name calling,  
for the Spirit calling;  
turn to your very own calling.  
this time, your name being called with love and appreciation.

your flight will be, and is, the story-teller.  
and this truth, contains only Life;  
is more powerful than any doubt.

when we see a black bird soaring  
we do not think of insults she endured,  
only of profound freedom,  
beauty,  
a gentle, humility-filled affirmation.

**and it is not only you.**

your intuitive flight  
will set others free,  
like the grace of small birds in a wide sky at dawn,  
a sight absorbed by those with feet on earth in this time.

I know there were times  
*you* did not believe in *you*.  
but I also know hope, when breathed into being  
overcomes...

...until the beauty, peace, confidence and serenity in your spirit  
is what is left upon you today.

this is you,  
redeemed, after shame and fear.  
this is how you gracefully, generously soar.