



**Two Original Poems Performed at The 24 Hour Plays on Broadway 2008
11.17.08 at the American Airlines Theater**

The Beat that Speaks by Olivia McClendon, Senior, The Facing History School '09

I write for the high-hat, kick and the snare,
utilizing each part of my mouth,
to create a poly-phonic mixture.
With no rhythm my life would be flat-line,
a constant variable of motionless actions.
I need the guaranteed heart of everlasting time
to maintain the frequency with its unified drum,
telling stories of the past or a future to come.
The oral form of communication,
the palm of a hand on a drum,
so you can say that the rhythm of my heart
gives me the power to speak.

A girl once told me
writing was air—
that it helped her escape from adolescence
pain and despair.
Fist-clenching anger,
no one to talk to,
family were strangers,
concealed expression,
putting danger in life.

So she wrote to release
the tone in her speech.
Sending symbols in syllables
a syrup to sweeten her tongue.
Unleashing the beast of a
caged one,
trapped in emotion.
Silence
needing to be let loose,
unleashing personality so vibrant
her mind flooded with disarray
negativity.
Her life-guard and breath:
the paper, the pen her float.

From her to me a synapse
writing was a source of saviour
this past stirs up the urge
to burn holes through notebooks,
send fires through sounds,
with the most profound
knowledge I have received.
From the days of struggle,
when every musical tribe told stories.
Revealing truth in breath,
revealing why I write.



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Why I Write by Emmanuel Minaya

Listen closely inspiration.
Watch closely aspiration.
Atmospherical thoughts mix with earthly vibes,
as I write thoughts down on pad.
I want to reach out to these kids and show them there's more to life
than what's at hand.
Games of chance, when the dealer does his job,
I write my cards,
a royal flush,
a life in order,
simplicity.

Ink and lead replace my blood,
in memory of my family.
My grandmother Theresa never grasped her dreams of
singing and writing,
She was forced to teach.
I carry this torch for her.
I sing her tunes for her.

My mother who gave birth at sixteen,
caring for the child
she held to her breast each night promising,
"You'll never have to experience this."
I carry that torch for her.
I fulfill her dreams for her.

For my father,
whom without I wouldn't have a point of reference,
whom without I wouldn't be able to grow up responsibly.
I carry that torch for him.
I do this not to become him.

I write for the capoeiristas down in Brazil,
Bahia, lifestyle of freedom and devotion.
I write for Fishers in the Panama Canal,
my words, their nets, their wealth.
I write for Dafurian child-soldiers Innocence broken, their loved ones stolen.
My words show them endless bounds.

Like Nas for the *state of mind*,
all to relay, express a message.
Structure that's not a necessity,
bear traps to clasp my feet,
barbed-wire to scratch my wings.

Dreams are an endless blue,
the sky that limits them are filled with
colors that match my optimism.
so this is from me to you:
follow your inspiration,



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write and talk
elegantly and eloquently respectively.
Find your purpose.
Listen to your heart beating relentlessly.
No one can take away what your heart wants to say.
Hold your soul from screaming what it wants to say.
So listen closely inspiration,
watch closely aspiration.
Be the river current
ever so clean and
always on the flow.