



We
Still
Live



arts.street @ YEA

This catalog was created by Arts Street, a program of the Youth Employment Academy. The Youth Employment Academy (YEA) is a non-profit whose mission is to serve young adults in breaking the cycle of generational poverty in Denver communities by gaining personal and economic stability through education, arts and technology and employment training.

Its arts and technology based program, Arts Street, uses the creative arts and arts professionals to empower youth to pursue future education and employment opportunities. It harnesses their talents, provides them with real-world experience in creative industries, nurtures leadership and helps them build valuable skills needed for creative careers.



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We Still Live (June through December 2017) is a community-based art venture with Arts Street@ YEA and nationally renowned Denver artist, Thomas Evans, designed to initiate change for underserved youth in the Denver community.

This art venture was originally inspired by Thomas Evans’ project *They Still Live*, in which local African American creatives participated in an interactive photo experience. They had their DNA tested and were then photographed by Evans with traditional African art from Paul

Hamilton’s extensive collection in Denver. The final results of their DNA and the photos were revealed and exhibited at RedLine Contemporary Art Center in 2016.

“[The project was] made to be, liberating, eye-opening and informative...an effort to spark interest in individuals to discover their heritage and to learn more about the history of their origin.”
—Thomas Evans

Expanding on this project, *We Still Live* aimed to provide arts-based pro-social alternatives to the influences of gang recruitment and community alienation for Denver area youth. Youth, ages 14 to 21, explored self-identity and cultural heritage and contributed to their neighborhoods through creative community impact projects. The program was designed to fit three areas: self-reflection and cultural exploration, training in creative industry skills, and creating social impact through community-based projects.



Photo by youth photographer Yokabed Ogbai @ Red Rocks photo shoot with Thomas Evans



Photo by youth photographer Neteru Davis during a photoshoot in Denver’s Arts District on Santa Fe

CALL FOR ACTION

“In gangs, the generational cycle of violence is a strong contributing factor to this lifestyle. Connecting to pro-social activities is a critical component of any gang intervention plan.”
— Paul Callanan, Director of Gang Reduction Initiative of Denver (GRID)

Initiating this project, we talked to youth about problems in their communities and they told us that gang involvement and violence was impacting their neighborhoods. One young man told us,

“Kids first look to joining a gang because they feel they don’t have a place in this world - or a point for even being. They need opportunities to shine a light on a new way.”

The main goal of *We Still Live* was to answer this call with a project based on heritage and community that included visual art and spoken word, cultural education, self-reflection and mentorship. It allowed our young people to initiate change in themselves, their peers and their community. They were able to define their

identity, and contribute to their community and shine a light on a new way.

In order to change perceptions, goals for the program, besides providing pro-social activities, included showing an increase in social-emotional intelligence, learning about one’s own heritage, as well as other cultures and completing a project that contributed to solving issues in their own neighborhoods.

SELF-REFLECTION, CREATIVE INDUS- TRY SKILLS AND CULTURAL EXPLORATION



Painting by youth artist Adama Bamba

Youth explored self-identity through poetry and visual art including photography, video design printmaking, painting, and digital design. To learn more about their genetic background, Arts Street partnered with Ancestry.com to provide participants with a DNA test. They were then given opportunities to respond creatively to new perceptions regarding their heritage and what that means to their concept of self.

CULTURAL EXPLORATION • SELF-IDENTITY • CREATIVE INDUSTRY SKILLS TRAINING • SELF-REFLECTION



IDENTITY MASKS

Youth captured their individual likeness by creating plaster masks of their faces and then decorating them symbolically to represent how they viewed themselves at the beginning of the program



SELF-PORTRAIT PRINTS

Using the medium of printmaking, students started with photographs of themselves and expressively carved their portraits into linoleum blocks which were then printed in vibrant colors onto paper.



SELF-REFLECTION POETRY

Guest artist Toluwanimi Obiwole worked with the youth to explore the power of their names through poetry.



• PRO-SOCIAL ACTIVITIES • GUEST SPEAKERS • JOB READINESS



FIELD TRIP TO PAUL HAMILTON'S COLLECTION OF AFRICAN ART

Youth participants visit the extensive collection of African art that Paul Hamilton has assembled over the last 30 years in his Denver home.



PHOTO SHOOT AT RED ROCKS

After visiting Paul Hamilton's collection of African masks, lead artist Thomas Evans accompanied *We Still Live* youth to Red Rocks and photographed them with cultural masks the participants chose for themselves.





FIELD TRIPS

Youth had many opportunities to attend field trips - both during summer programming and on weekends throughout the fall. Photography field trips included Red Rocks amphitheater, the Arts District on Santa Fe, Garden of the Gods, and downtown Denver.



Many of the field trips youth participated in involved self-reflection around cultural exploration. Youth visited the Denver Art Museum, Chicano Humanities and Arts Council (CHAC) Gallery and Paul Hamilton's personal African art collection.



GUEST SPEAKERS

Guest speakers -Edna Futrell, Paul Hamilton, Stella Yu, Monica Datta, Toluwanimi Obiwole, and Sean Trujillo (CHAC)- shared their knowledge and personal histories with the youth, encouraging them to explore their own cultural backgrounds.



WEEKEND INTENSIVES: PAINTING

After learning the results of their DNA testing, weekend intensives gave youth an opportunity to work with various artists to create reaction pieces. Lead artist Thomas Evans worked with participants in painting self-portraits utilizing his distinct style from his own paintings and murals.



URBAN PHOTO SHOOT

Professional photographer Blake Jackson led participants on a photo shoot in downtown Denver where they learned to create unique portraits of themselves and each other. The images were then creatively manipulated in Adobe Suite by youth artists.



MIXED MEDIA ASSEMBLAGES

Youth artists worked with artists Carlos Frésquez and Javier Flores to construct 3-D self-concept sculptures that explored their identity through photography and mixed media.



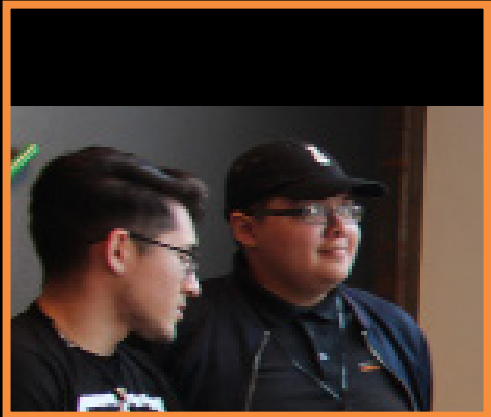
COMMUNITY IMPACT PROJECTS

A major part of the *We Still Live* program was to help youth realize the impact that they can have on their own neighborhoods. Youth participants were given the task of identifying the challenges they saw in their communities and offering creative and cost effective solutions. Collaborative teams submitted proposals and the top projects were chosen for completion. The final groups had to identify a problem and possible solutions, as well as include a budget, time line and complete an oral presentation on their proposal to friends, teachers, and family at RedLine Contemporary Arts Center. The group projects focused on:

- BEAUTIFICATION: Improving Neighborhoods Through Art
- COMMUNITY SUPPORT: Providing Public Service Information
- EDUCATION: Community-Oriented Communication



Youth smile for the camera after presenting their community projects at the Mariposa block party



Hoping to encourage youth to quit smoking, this team presented their anti-smoking Instagram page at RedLine



BEAUTIFICATION Improving Neighborhoods Through Art

BRIGHT BEASTS

This project focused on inexpensive, easy-to-create, decorative solar lighting for safety and to improve neighborhood visibility. The team created an instructable video and made prototypes they exhibited at the 2017 Mariposa block party. To learn how to create your own yarn lantern visit: www.instructables.com/id/solar-powered-yarn-lantern

Team members:
Phu Le,
Carly Toppen,
Zach Gutierrez,
Sulaiman Shabazz



LIGHT UP THE STREETS
With
BRIGHT BEASTS

This project has been created by Art Street students in order to:

- improve safety,
- increase togetherness,
- and encourage sustainability

Through the use of cheap, easy to make, yarn lanterns, we aim to increase the feeling of safety through lighting and visibility while beautifying the communities of Denver.

LEARN TO MAKE YOUR OWN

<http://www.instructables.com/id/Solar-Powered-Yarn-Lantern/>



GHETTO GOES GREEN

This group created a website and designed a new city sign to help clean up and represent a positive image for their Montbello neighborhood. Members of the team presented their proposal to Denver City Councilwoman Stacie Gilmore in August 2017. (<https://artsstreet.wixsite.com/ghettogoesgreen>)

Team members: Raquel Benitez, Danijha Turner, Albert Ortega, Alan Ochoa



BARNUM PARK PSA

Concerned with the ecosystem of Barnum Park and how it has been negatively impacted by people, this group created an informative video encouraging the clean up of the lake. https://youtu.be/6e_KbXDjsEE

Team members:
Eliseo Vigil, Frankie Morales,
Alexis Casas-Casas,
Juan Cabrera-Ramirez



Providing Public Service Information

THE HELP

The Help group felt strongly about providing food and care packages to people in need. They collected food donations and worked with the Christ in the City organization to distribute meals and hygiene packs in Civic Center Park.



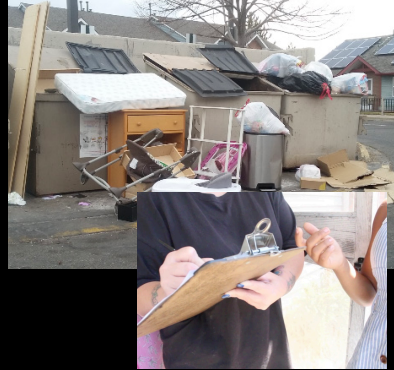
Team members: Celecia Garcia, Dahlil Thomas, Kameelah Simmons, Mia Cloud, Savyon Gonzales-Combs-Dixon

PETS ARE FAM

Realizing the importance of animals in people's lives, the Pets are Fam team collected donations to create care packages to give to homeless people with pets and distributed them at Civic Center Park and at the Mariposa neighborhood block party.



Team members: Tanya Kaufman, Jakayla Johnson, Cariana Williams



NORTH LINCOLN RECYCLING

Seeing the need for recycling in her North Lincoln housing development, this youth worked on petitioning for recycling bins and created a persuasive video she will be presenting to the Denver Housing Authority's Board of Commissioners.

By Neteru Davis

IN THE HEIGHTS: NO PARE, SIGUE

This intern organized a social media marketing campaign to promote her high school's musical and the importance of funding theatre programs in schools.



It gets kids to build a REAL passion for what they're doing.

By Kiara Johnson

SAVING HOMELESS ANIMALS

This summer participant created a promotional PSA video highlighting the benefits of adopting pets from MaxFund, a "no kill" shelter.

By Jackie Tejada

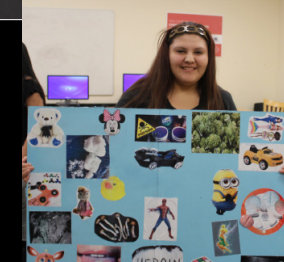


Jackie Tejada
Arts Street Intern

COMMUNITY EDUCATION Community-Oriented Communication

P.Y.G.S: POSITIVE YOUTH GROWTH SUPPORT

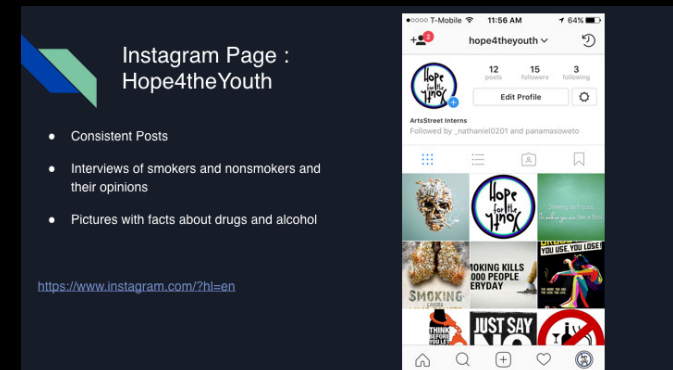
Concerned with adolescent drug abuse, as well as knowing people who have struggled with substance abuse, the creators of this project put together a booth with interactive games and murals for Mariposa's 2017 block party. Their goal was to educate 8 to 18 year-olds about drug and alcohol abuse.



Team members: Donavin Nguyen-Nevarez, Arriyahna Garcia, Isaiah Bruce, Nysia Flood, Janette Warren, Jonathan Sorto, Joseph Brown, Mia Martinez, Mai Sena Sut, Zakiah Hudson

HOPE 4 THE YOUTH

This group's goal was to bring awareness to the dangers of using drugs, alcohol and tobacco at a young age. To do this they created a PSA video and started a Instagram account to help prevent smoking among teenagers. Team members: Madison Pickett, Azahi Salvador Rojas, Kori Martinez, Nathaniel Yslava



KNOWING CULTURES

Seeing the isolation and the lack of connection between people in their neighborhood, this team created a website where neighbors could build community by sharing unique facts and traditions of their individual cultures.

WHAT IS CULTURE?

Culture is a term used to describe the quality of a society, but it is so much more than this. Culture is an infinite pattern of knowledge that is passed down from generation to generation. From clothing to food to social practices, it shows how tradition within a society is truly powerful. But there isn't much known. As time goes on, cultural customs are forgotten so this website is to remind people of how most work in different continents.

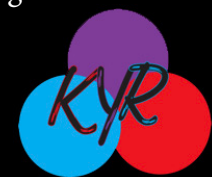


Team members: Beatriz Hernandez, Humberto Marquez, Zharia Leach

<https://zharialeach.wixsite.com/mysite-1>

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

This team created posters providing resources for youth on legal rights and promoting positive police interactions. Their goal was to display the posters in area high schools where youth could get information quickly and easily.



Team members: Christian Morales, Adama Bamba, Dakota Deleon



DANGER ON THE ROAD: REDUCE RECKLESS DRIVING

Group members designed posters that show the dangers of reckless driving. Their objective was to hang posters in public areas where drag racing is prevalent.

Team members: Mariana Sanabria, Yobani Martinez, Jose Esparza

DNA REVEAL

“What does it mean to be black, white, mixed European, Native American, or other? What is the African in African American? How different am I from my neighbor?”

- Thomas “Detour” Evans, *They Still Live*

Inspired by *They Still Live*, a major element of *We Still Live* was exploring heritage and ancestry. This included partnering with Ancestry.com to provide each youth with their DNA results showing them where their ancestors came from. The power of DNA testing was an important element of their journey of self-discovery. Seeing their results, many students were amazed about the diversity within their genetics and learned that they represented more than just one country or culture. Participants were excited to learn about their genetic heritage and pose their own questions to what it means to be a unique individual.



YOUTH ARTISTS SHOWCASE

YOKABED OGBAI, YOUTH ARTIST MENTOR

I am Eritrean
I am (Ane) Nay Adei Tesfa, nai weladitey fikiri eiye
English: My country’s hope, my mother’s love
I am (Ene) desta ena Fikir nen
English: Happiness and love
I am (Io sono) una donna, una guerriera che si batte
per chió che ama
English: a woman, a warrior willing to fight for
what she loves



I am joy
The color from every stroke
The beauty within a book
A survivor of what they took
I am human
I am love
I am Eritrean



ADAMA BAMBA AGE 16



HE, ME, HIM, I
Real, Kind, And Fake.
Grand Son Of
A Heroic Grandmother
That Is Now Happy But Broken.
Lover Of Art,
Music, And Fashion.
Who Feels Responsible for Others
And Their Feelings.

Who Needs Time to Get Use to
Understanding and Support.
Who Gives What He Can,
All He Can And The Harsh Truth.
I Fear Failure, Disappointing
Others And Art.
He Will See GOD.
He Dreams Of Satisfaction
And Joy.

ALAN OCHOA AGE 17



My name is Alan Ochoa.
Alan-smart,questioning, respectful.
Ochoa- hardworking, reliable.
If i was a animal i would be a owl.
Owls are wise smart
and perfect at their skill.
If i was a weapon
i would be a hammer .
If a hammer is used correctly it can create
but if used wrong it can destroy.
Worst name I’ve ever been called
is lazy and worthless.
Best thing I’ve ever been called
is hardworking.
My name is hardworking.
My name is questioning.



ALBERT ORTEGA

AGE 16



My name is black cat

For many people ignore me, and many enjoy being with me
For I strike like dueling katanas hurting both physically, and mentally
But at the same time able to protect those who are emotionally important
For that is me on the outside
But for me on the inside, I am the color of dark blue
For it resembles the deep ocean blue
I swim alone, free in the deep blue for nowhere dares to be there
For the price to be free, I am engulfed by darkness, but not fully
I enjoy being alone on the inside, in darkness
where many would despise it, for that is me.



ALEXIS CASAS-CASAS

AGE 17

Happy, Excited, Joyful
Brother of the best 5 and 11 year old
Who loves family, nature, and traveling
Who feels excited about the future
Who needs joy, love and also food
Who gives happiness attention and experience
Who fears the world
Who would like to see world peace
Dreaming of a better future



My name is Alexis Casas
and I came to tell the truth
Truth is, I am tired
Tired of school
School is where you are forced to
be the same
Same as everyone else and be
“normal”
Normal is not normal, it is a cage.



ARRIAHANA GARCIA

AGE 15

Thinker, perseverer, dreamer,
I am the daughter of a fighter
Who loves knowledge, passion, and honesty,
Who feels determined to build a better life
Who needs guidance
Who gives advice and creativity
Who fears failure and rejection,
Who would like to see life with less struggle
Who dreams of success.



AZAHÍ SALVADOR ROJAS

AGE 15



A Child was born on June 17
With both hands and feet
On his birthday
he knew how to walk
His brothers only played sports
and with toys
They taught him how to draw a car
And everything he loved was cars
Until at the age of 7
He entered into a karate class
And soccer practice
He was good at both of them
With multiple wins
With his team and solo
At the age of 14 he met his first love
And in that year he lost his father
But he tried to smile
And he did it for over 3 years
And every inch and ounce of

sadness was gone in just one day
By his first love and family
And now he stands up
Does what he loves
Writes and creates music
Works hard and tries to be
The best son for his mother
And tries to be the best brother,
friend, and boyfriend
Everything in life
Brings negativity from others
Or brings positivity
But always be positive
For the way you are
And treat everyone equal
No matter what
But everything in life takes time
And you will have everything
You ever wanted.

BEATRIZ HERNANDEZ

AGE 15

Introvert, positive, and a procrastinator
Sister of 6 siblings
Who loves music,
Outer space and nature
Who feels joy about
most things
Who need 2 friends
for support
Who gives a smile
to strangers passing by
Who fears rejection,
crowds and loud places
Who'd like to see
what's beyond the milky way
Who is small but has big dreams.



CARIANA WILLIAMS

AGE 15

Is a smart, talkative
and curly headed girl,
Who is the daughter of Stephanie.
She loves her mom, music and food,
But frightened of lighting.
She needs a home, food and support
But gives money, presents and food.
She fears death,
natural disasters and wasps.
She'd like to see Tokyo Japan
and she dreams of success.



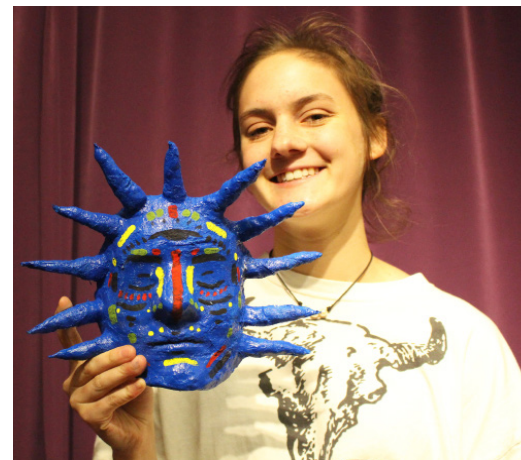
My name is Cariana
and I came to tell the truth.
The truth is unicorns exist on earth.
They hide behind Starbucks.
So Starbucks had an idea.
Let unicorns poop in a cup
then add sprinkles.
Sprinkles would sparkle a message. The
message would say
"limited time only."



CARLY TOPPEN

AGE 16

Creative, thinker, stubborn
Sister of brother and sister
Who loves music, art and the people in her life
Who is excited about her future
Who needs to be independent, art and music
Who gives advice, love and support
Who fears working in an office,
staying in one place and being bored
Who would like to see the world
Who dreams of living for art.



My name is Carly and I came
to tell the truth,
Truth is the mountains are a
woman, the woman lives alone
at peace. She moves sometimes
but she is mostly still and quiet.

CELECIA GARCIA

AGE 16



My name is the stealth, the care,
The protection from the sci-fi wolf you read about.
My name was the exploration that happened before I was born.
I am the fantasy you watch on tv. The pirates who killed.
The ones seeking adventure. I am the mermaids
lurking the depths of the ocean, singing songs to lure the sailors away.
My name is the purple seas I've been attached to since day one.
I am not Celacia, Cecilia, Chechilia, or Cece.
My name is Celecia Estrella Reyna Garcia.



CHRISTIAN MORALES-GONZALEZ

AGE 16

“If your limbs were instruments, what would they be?”

Excellent question, because they'd be instruments that are esoterically phenomenal, unpredictable, enjoyable, intangible, and seemingly inconceivable. They'd be devices that undeniably, compellingly, and instinctively attract, submerge, and stimulate an infinitely expanding and infinitely transforming psychological, physical, and emotional world constructed instantaneously from the sounds that transcend theoretical and hypothetical excitations, fluctuations, and oscillations...



DHALIL THOMAS

AGE 18

Dope, Creative, Sarcastic

Brother of my Brothers

Parkour, Music, Art

Confident about the future

To keep an open mind, always be learning,

Passion, Art, Ideas, Motivation

Not Living My Potential, Regret

The Entire World

Being Free, Travel The World,

Exploring My Imagination



DAKOTA DELEON

AGE 16

I came to tell you the truth

Truth is that the Broncos

are going to win the Super Bowl

Super Bowl trophy is coming to

Denver again

Denver is where I was raised

Raised by a mom and dad

Mom and Dad

had a drinking problem

Problems was all around me

when I was young

Young too young to understand

why they were arguing

and just told me to go back to bed

Bed I didn't want to go

Go back to bed is what they said

but I couldn't, so I stayed up

playing GTA.



Beautiful Name to me

Until I go to school

Sarah, Rebecca, & Tamara is all I see

When the teacher butchers my name

All the kids laugh at me

Like my name is this unknown

Ghetto entity...

I smile and brush it off

But to me it's still saddening

But Danijha is still me

I wanted a different name

But is it really necessary

Another Sally, Sarah, Susie?

Nah I'm good

Because Danijha is me and I am Danijha

Who sees clear as day

But is still this raging fire

Ready to burn anyone with just my words

Sometimes a delicate flower

Afraid of getting hurt

I could be your best friend

And your worst enemy

I say what I want

And do not care about feelings

But at the same time

I'm afraid of hurting feelings

I'm complicated, it worries me inside

I still haven't figured myself out

I'm like a puzzle of a million pieces

But with no edge and no guide

No picture to see how I will turn out

I'm lost inside my mind

Sometimes I really get to myself

And there is no one

That can possibly understand

This raging fire ready to burn

This delicate flower

Afraid of getting hurt

No one can possibly

Understand

Me

DANIJHA TURNER

AGE 16





DONAVIN NGUYEN-NEVAREZ
AGE 17



My name is ambitious, I go everyday thinking of ways to my dream
to protect the ones I love, and to be successful,
I am the Metal Dragon that soars the night skies
Hard headed due to the Taurus blood, but strong willed
I am the brother of a 3 year old
I am raised in a neighborhood that our own government gave up on.
I am a person who is curious of what the world is cooking up for me,
I am the son of a mother who has taught me to never give up,
I am a soaring Metal Dragon who just got his wings,
I am Donavin a son, a brother, who will seek his dreams.



ELISEO VIGIL
AGE 17

I am a stranger to song,
Music to me is but a fraction of a second long,
Music to me is the sound of a shutter,
Open to close yet never stutters,
Beat after beat as my heart stutters,
My legs are the tripod I stand upon,
Bipod to be specific,
Carrying me from atlantic to pacific,
My hands are my setting,
Setting the scene from landscape to wedding, My
eyes are my lenses
and the glasses are my focus,
Need it in manual because strain has broke us,
My brain is the very monitor
on which I have stored my Mona Lisa,
My grand masterpiece
everyone shall have a piece of,
My heart is my battery keeping out of foul-ery,
The shutter of me captures my world,
To the scenery to my beautiful girl,
I am the very music made as the shutter clicks.



FRANCISCO MORALES
AGE 16



17 years old and doing an internship at Arts Street.
I am happy, but also I'm a bad person when I am mad
I have 3 brothers and one sister
I love my mom, my brothers, my sister and my dad.
I feel good for what I have.
I give respect to people,
so I can receive respect from the people
I'd like to see my family
And I dream of being something big in life.

HUMBERTO MARQUEZ
AGE 15

I am Humberto Marquez
Quiet, Smart, and Perverted
Brother of 2
Who loves Family, Friends, and Games
Who feels Happiness in his blessings
Who needs Support, and Love



ISAIAH BRUCE

AGE 16



My name is similar to ocean
 Everything I aspire to be, untameable and free
 A sound as satisfying as the falling rain hitting against the surface,
 A mind so complex, mysterious, and deep
 As the dark water filled with wonder,
 I refuse to not persevere,
 I will continuously move forward,
 Crashing at the shore or any obstacle in my way,
 No matter how many times I will be pushed out,
 I'll come back twice as strong.



JACKIE TEJADA

AGE 17



- 1) Jackie Tejada
- 2) Salvadorian, cold hearted, strong
- 3) Sister of Yahir and Derick
- 4) Who loves penguins, family, and boyfriend
- 5) Who feels judged about my race
- 6) Who needs to be accepted, respected, and loved
- 7) Who gives food, advice, and respect
- 8) Who fears to be over powered, losing the people I love,
and losing my stuffed penguins
- 9) Who'd likes to see my boyfriend and family supporting me
- 10)Who dreams about CSU and being successful in life.



JAKAYLA JOHNSON

AGE 16

The best day I've ever had is:
 Something I don't really remember
 I know I was happy and at peace
 It wasn't the funnest
 and I didn't do anything
 That was extremely exciting,
 But I do know I was with family
 FAMILY: Mom, Dad,
 Cousins, aunties, uncles
 No friends,
 No outsiders,
 No neighbors



Just me and the family
 That day,
 Wasn't anything special
 No birthdays
 No graduation
 Nothing special at all
 I guess it was the best
 because maybe...
 I was with
 The people
 I love the most
 I was happy
 and at Peace
 No friends
 No outsiders
 No neighbors.

JANETTE WARREN

AGE 15



Frizzy Fanatic but nothin' less than a smile
 Sista of Jade, Daughter of Jamila
 Who loves all; not really but she tries
 Feels the need to stay in the race
 Needs nothin' but herself; at least she likes to think that
 Tries to give LOVE, COMPASSION, and PATIENCE
 Fears the end, but would like to see the beginning
 Dreams of simplicity in complex.



JOSEPH BROWN

AGE 16

My name is joey
I'm like a baby kangaroo
I can't jump high because I'm too far in the hole to get out
The sky is black and gray
But once I hit the top, the sky will be bright blue
and life will get better
Like a bird with a broken wing,
That'll soon get better and fly again



JONATHAN SORTO

AGE 14

I am the one that is Fun, Friendly,
A Survivor, and I am Brave
I am one that stands next to 2 sisters
And a proud single mother
Who will stand for whoever she loves
Who loves when people are trustworthy,
Who also loves his family and animals
Who feels sad when his sister
Left to another person
Who needs Family, Food, and Love
Who Gives love, Happiness, Support,
And gives an ear when needed
Who fears being alone, not remembering,
and loses everything
Who'd like to see change the World
Who dreams of a world without hate.



JOSE ESPARZA

AGE 16

If my limbs were instruments
they would be low but loud as a Baritone.
Loud as a trumpet trying to make a song
that would trigger an emotion on someone or somebody.



JUAN CABRERA

AGE 17

Juan Antonio Cabrera Ramirez,
I am Caring, Optimistic, Strong
Brother of 3
Who loves, the girl I hold dear, and life in general
Who feels hope to become a better man than my father
Who needs positivity, care, and respect
Who gives my time, experience, and joy
Who fears not being good enough, wasting time, and not living life
Who'd like to see the world
Who dreams of living life to the fullest



KAMEELAH SIMMONS

AGE 16

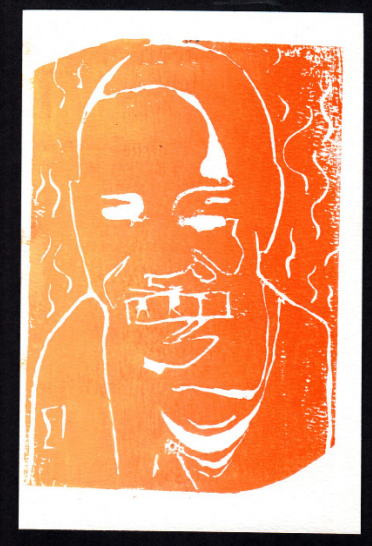


My name is everything
I am not “Perfection”
My name is beauty which I feel I am not ...
My name is everything you could be, but more and better ...
I die to know you’ll never forget me
Unique listening, the unique love I give to you
For you are perfection I could say ...
Everything I give to you may be perfection ...
but ME ... I am not
DAYDREAMING



KIARA JOHNSON

AGE 17



My name is dominance because the harsh
guttural K on your tongue is followed by
the stretched vowels of I-A.
The sweet serpent’s song of R and ended
with another A for “and then what?”



K is King of the jungle.
I is intelligence
though my test scores
don’t define me.
A for artist because I create
things that make a difference.
R for Really?
Can she really do that?
What is she really capable of?
And lastly A,
is “and then what?”
What follows?
Where to next?
Ask the King of the jungle.
She is Kiara.



KORI MARTINEZ

AGE 19

I am humble, quiet,
and a very deep thinker.
I am the oldest of 5 making me
the proud big brother
of 4 girls and 1 boy.
Who loves hip hop, comic books,
and my family.
Who feels inspired
when people like me prosper.
Who needs knowledge,
art, and happiness.
Who gives love, truth,
and guidance.
Who fears not being happy,
Seeing people around me fail,
and seeing ignorance prosper.
Who’d like to see realness thrive.
Who dreams of one day
achieving his many dreams.



MADISON PICKETT

AGE 16



Pineapples are for Christmas
My name is Madison
and I came to tell the Truth
Truth is Pineapples are named that
way because they look like
Pine cones
Pine cones though have no relation
To Christmas
Christmas though is the only
Time people buy dead tree seeds
Seeds are what plants come from
From the ground they grow into trees
Trees which later are decorated for
Christmas
Christmas is where people are most
likely to buy pine cones
Pine cones which inspired the name
for pineapples.



MAI SENA SUT

AGE 18



I am Mai
I am, me, myself deep in the ocean sea
In my family I'm brother
Hoping some day I'll be free
Even though freedom all around by human being life under the tree
We needed a strong roof because time, time never stops
Just goes faster than our health.
I was given from the father that nobody can see
Fears, fears just like a dead rose from the old me
Like see the moon, sun touching the ocean sea
Big big dreams taking me to deep sleep.



MARIANA SANABRIA

AGE 16

My name is the
Four letters that come tumbling
Out of my little sister's mouth.
The mouth that always asks me
If I love her,
Every single time I get mad.
Her little chubby fingers
wrap around my hand.
The same hand
that held her the day she was born.
Born on the day where people were
Still recovering
from the Christmas feast.



MIA CLOUD

AGE 16



My name is swim (Mia)
I swam across the ocean as I heard
someone call for me,
Call for me in a way I never heard
before I heard MYA! MYA!
But yet I didn't respond
Because that isn't
The name I was given.
A beautiful name,
A name that can just bring joy
to your eyes,
A name that just flows through your
teeth.
My Name.



MIA MARTINEZ

AGE 17



I am artistic, strong, powerful
I am a younger sister of 2 sisters and a daughter of a single mother
I love my niece and nephew and my mother
I need respect, support from others
Family and friends give me love, care and friendship
My fears are growing up, giving up, life and death
I would like to see California, the beach
My dreams are to become successful in everything I do
and find something that I will love
and become interested in my Career.



NATHANIEL YSLAVA
AGE 17

My name is Nathaniel Peter Yslava
and I come to tell the truth
Truth is what I seek in life
Life is what you get
from how much you've been living
Living to the fullest is what I'll do
Do not take opportunity for granted
or else you'll lose your chance
Chance isn't always given a second time
Time is limited
and should be spent without any regrets
Regrets can prevent you from success
Success can only be determined by you
You are the only the true
obstacle which lies in front of your path
A path of reaching
and accomplishing your goals
Goals that keep your head in the game
Game like you are the player
and winner of your own creation
Creation is the result of your mind
Your mind is power
Power is knowledge
and can be gained
from everyday life
if you take the time to stop
and look around
and expose yourself to its beauty



NETERU DAVIS
AGE 16

My name is
Neteru Souflower Davis
And I came to tell the truth
The truth is I am not the girl
from the Hunger Games who was
killed with a spear
Yet spears run through my blood
When you call me Ru
Ru the name
I told others to call me because their
tongues were too weak
to pronounce my name
Neh Te Roo
The Neteru a group of angels

from ancient kemet
I can no longer hide behind
two letters
I am proud of my name
and who I am
My name is protecting, flying
and never forgetting
The angles, life
and the name of the family
who disowned my grandmother
for having a black child
My name is
Neteru Souflower Davis



NYSIA FLOOD
AGE 15



Caring, artistic, and goofy
Sister of Ray, Daimonni,
and unborn baby.
Daughter of Damita
Loves family, food, and friends
Who feels proud of my mom who
raised me to be the best I can be
Who needs nothing much from
people but respect,
Who gives time to kids,
and my mom
Fears of spiders,
losing the people I love and dying
Who'd like to visit Hawaii
Who dreams of being a well paid
lawyer and a beautician.



PHU LE
AGE 19



My name is Phu and I came to tell the truth,
The truth is that names are irrelevant, and labels don't define me.
But my name is good fortune. My presence is glowing,
If darkness is the absence of color, I am the epitome of light.
I am my family's chisel.
Sculpting and picking at our family's pride one chip at a time



RAQUEL BENITEZ

AGE 16

R a Q u e L Raquel raQuel
 My name is Raquel.
 The purpose was Español
 Like your mom,
 mine spent months trying to find
 the perfect toned name for me
 My journey was meant to be by Socorro
 But my father didn't see me as that
 So now I am Raquel
 I've responded to,
 and have written Raquel
 above my homework up until 4th grade
 I'd hear my English teacher
 during roll call
 R A Q U E L
 "No it's Rachel,
 call me Rachel from now on please"
 I hate the first day of school
 when I meet my teachers and new people
 I introduce myself as Rachel
 but my attendance sheet says otherwise
 The problem isn't that I hate it
 I hate some people that say it
 I'm sorry if I seem to come off wrong
 But my handsome brown father
 named me Raquel
 My mom, my grandma, my grandpa, my
 auntie, my uncle and my cousins
 all loved Raquel.



SAVYON GONZALEZ-COMBS-DIXSON

AGE 15



My name is Red.
 I am the color of the blood
 that flows through you.
 I am the color
 that could mean good or bad.
 I am the color of blood
 that can come out of your body
 when you are hurt.
 I am the color
 that can make you
 rethink your whole entire life.
 I am the color of a demon
 that has come from heaven,
 that can help you or destroy you.
 I am the color that can make you
 think about horrible and vicious
 things yet still seem beautiful.
 My name is Savyon Dixon.



SULAIMAN SHABAZZ

AGE 15



My name is Humble and I am strong
 and when I am not humble I am a beast
 CLICK CLACK BANG as loud as a siren
 I am like a lion loud and strong
 I am not harmful

I do not bite because I am not Soloman, I am Sulaiman.



TANYA KAUFMAN

AGE 21

I am Tanya Kaufman
 I am unique, artistic,
 and a lover of language
 I am the the sister of a
 libra and a crab
 I am the daughter of a leo
 and the daughter of Zeus
 I am one who is passionate
 about the written word, family,
 and creating
 alternative fantasy worlds
 I am one who takes those
 around me into my heart
 I am one who needs food
 for my body to survive,
 and writing and family
 for my soul to survive
 I am one who gives my heart,
 my mind, and my writing
 to the world around
 I am one who fears for the health of
 my mother and father,
 for the costs of money,
 and for the fear of failure
 I am one who'd like
 to see my sisters,
 Ellen and Victoria
 I am one who'd like
 to travel the world
 I am one who dreams
 of a better world for those around
 I am one who dreams of equality and
 peace to come
 to the entire human race.



YOBANI MARTINEZ
AGE 16

Tail, not much of a talker
I have both a brother and a sister
Video games, family, manga
Sad, angry, calm, frustrated, guilt
Sun, night, earth
Food, video games, mobile phone
Home
Simple life



ZACHARY GUTIERREZ
AGE 17

Honest, Funny, Short
Brother of Nicholas Gutierrez
Who loves football, music,
and jewelry
I love sports
I need oxygen, love and food
I fear spiders
I would like to see Metallica
I dream of being able to do back flips



ZAKIAH HUDSON
AGE 14



My name is Brave, brave as in Strong, strong for all and everyone that comes and goes.

Intelligent as if I had the world in my head,
Beautiful just like a blooming rose in the mist of a forest.
Dark as if I was as glamerous as a dark horse.

I am love I am sweet I am caring. Her name is... my name is Zakiah.



ZHARIA LEACH
AGE 16

My name is Grazing
I am the one who often has the thoughts
and wishes of being a princess
or just royalty, but no.
I can be called my sister's name
even though I am older.
I can be viewed as a standard
that society places me as, no.
I am a bow and arrow,
Ready to hit the target with a few chances.
With my creativity, I will be mighty but
until then, I will graze in my field.



OUTCOMES

We Still Live kicked off in June 2017 working with 49 youth over seven weeks of intense programming.

94% **75%**

of the youth completed the summer program. Youth were referred from a variety of community organizations as well as Denver Public Schools Career Launch program.

are in families that fall below half of Denver's median income, **50%** fall below 30%. **79 %** receive free and reduced lunch.

89% **87%**

said that because of the *We Still Live* program, they understand that someone who looks or sounds different than me may not be that different after all.

believed coming to Arts Street helped them know more about people of other cultures, races or ethnic groups.

78% **80%**

felt that after coming to Arts Street's *We Still Live* program they can make more of a difference.

said that because of the *We Still Live* program they would be more aware that they sometimes have ideas about people that are not true.



"Arts Street helped me understand who I am as a person."

- *We Still Live* Participant

"I like that we are able to explore different cultures as well as our own [and]... that we have explored various artistic styles that I have never tried before."

- *We Still Live* Participant

RESULTS

85% **66%**

live in Denver area neighborhoods that have statistically higher crime. **31%** of those youth live in the top 20% areas of the highest rates of violent crime in Denver.

of the youth reported at least one of the following risk factors for gang involvement:

- They had received a ticket from law enforcement, been arrested or had other contact with the juvenile justice system.
- They knew someone who had been involved with a gang
- Someone in their family had been arrested and/or convicted of a crime.
- They had friends who had been involved with a gang
- There was gang activity in their neighborhood.
- Someone in their family had been involved with a gang.

82%

said that because of the *We Still Live* program they would try harder not to judge people based on skin color.

80%

felt that after the *We Still Live* program they are better at handling whatever comes their way.



Youth artists Adama Bamba, Dahlil Thomas, Joseph Brown, and Nysia Flood completed these self-concept mixed media assemblages during a weekend intensive.

WE STILL LIVE



THOMAS EVANS (DETOUR), VISUAL ARTIST

His current art focus is all about connecting music and fine arts through traditional methods and technology. Much of his work consists of channeling concepts and issues about the urban arts culture through portraits of minority and urban subjects. Currently a resident artist at RedLine and Denver Art Museum, his goal is to capture every sense of his audience, thus breaking down barriers and making it easier to be engulfed in the canvas.

JC FUTRELL, ARTS STREET @ YEA AND REDLINE



is a spoken word and visual artist, hip hop performer and educator. In 2015 he was awarded Diversity Artist of the Year from the National Association of Campus Activities and recently his dedication to working with youth at YEA in the visual arts and job training awarded him with the position of Executive Director of Educational Programming at RedLine. His work has been featured on National Public Radio (NPR), The Huffington Post and the 2016 PBS special, The American Graduate.



JODY CHAPEL, ARTS STREET @ YEA is an artist, art educator and an active advocate for arts and culture in Colorado. She has had a career as a designer, art director, and creative director. She has volunteered for arts advocacy groups and taught art and design in public schools for over 10 years. She has a BFA from Metropolitan State University in painting and a masters degree in studio art from Regis University. She loves helping young people realize that they are all creative and that possibilities in art are endless.



CHELSEA ROMANIELLO, ARTS STREET @ YEA

has been working with students all over the world for over 8 years . She has photographed and worked in the international art field, residing in Vancouver Canada and Santiago Chile for over 9 years. Her passion for art, creative exploration and teaching found an amazing home at Arts Street four years ago where she enjoys watching students escape their day-to-day problems with a paintbrush, camera or carving tool.



YOKABED OGBAI, ARTS STREET@YEA YOUTH ARTIST MENTOR

Her favorite thing about art is using it as a means of expression without words and how it acts as an escape from the world. She views her creative skills as a form of solving problems. She loves digital design and she draws much of her inspiration from comic books and graphic novels. As a youth artist mentor this summer, Yoki specialized in spoken word and helping other youth



TULAWANIMI OBIWOLE, SPOKEN WORD ARTIST

is a Nigerian poet, performer, and workshop facilitator based in Denver, Colorado. She is a Brave New Voices international slam champion, a Denver city slam champion, and author of an upcoming chapbook. She has been a member of the Denver Minor Disturbance youth poetry team, and is currently a member of the Slam Nuba poetry team. In 2015 she was announced as Denver's



DR. PAUL HAMILTON, EDUCATOR, COLLECTOR & HISTORIAN

A Denver educator for 45 years, and community activist, Hamilton has also been a principal, college teacher, Colorado State Representative 1969-1973 (5-Points area), elder, author, restaurant owner, and African art and book collector. His collection of African art is one of the regions largest ever assembled by one man. His collection took over 30 years to build and represents a large swath of the communities that occupied, and still occupy, the African continent.



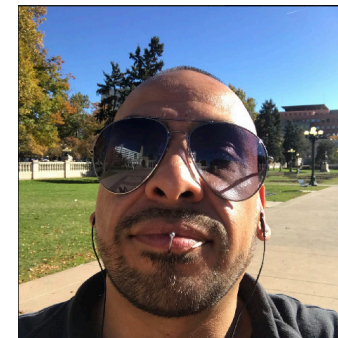
BLAKE JACKSON (@JAKE_ BLACKSON), PHOTOGRAPHER

is a self-taught photographer based in Denver. He specializes in moody portraiture, captivating concert photography and surreal urban captures. In the short time he's been in the industry, he has garnered praise from local and national publications; has partnered with massive international brands such as Uniqlo, and has photographed acclaimed musicians such as Chance the Rapper, Big K.R.I.T., Bassnectar, RL Grime, Tory Lanez, Party Next Door and Rae Sremmurd.



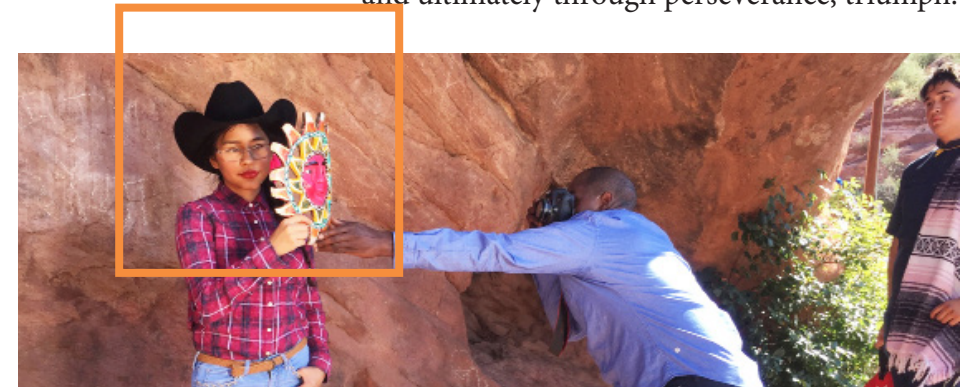
CARLOS FRÉSQUEZ, VISUAL ARTIST

Born in Denver, Colorado, he received a BA from Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSUD) and a MFA from the University of Colorado, Boulder. He has exhibited his drawings, prints, installations and paintings in at least 30 U.S. states and in a dozen different countries. Carlos has lectured about Chicano Art history and his own artwork at many colleges, galleries and art centers. He is an Associate Professor of Art at MSUD and is deeply involved in the Denver community.



JAVIER FLORES, VISUAL ARTIST

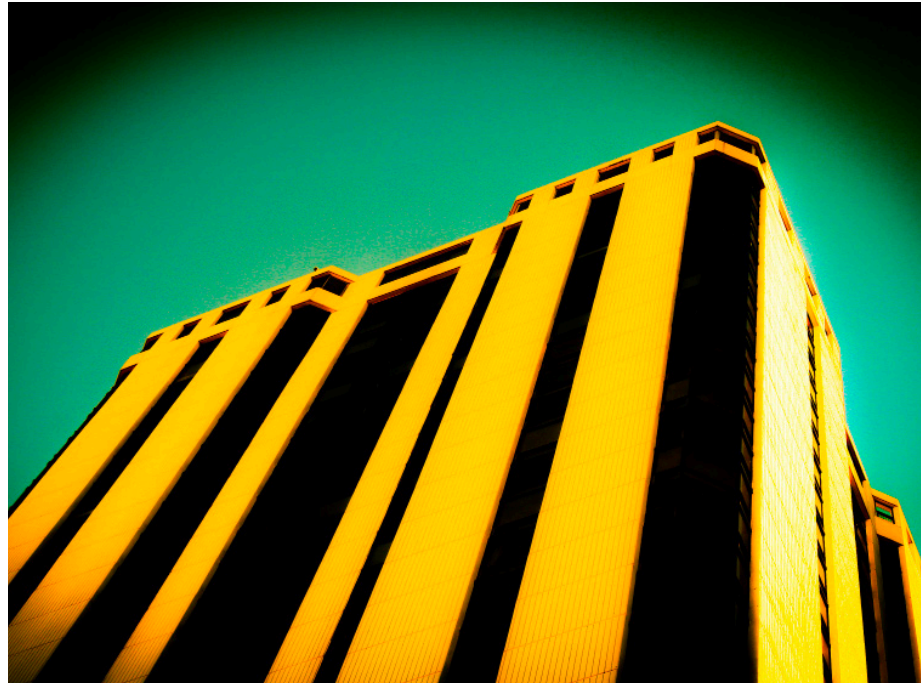
is a Denver artist who obtained both a Bachelors and Masters of Fine Art. Between finishing his B.F.A. and pursuing his M.F.A. he helped to start a local co-operative gallery and was a member of another. Javier has also worked as an artist-in-residence at VSA Colorado Access gallery, a space dedicated to helping artists with physical and cognitive impairments. The reflective aspect of his work is an exploration into identity in the form of culture, ecology, masculinity, temporality, loss and ultimately through perseverance, triumph.



Thomas Evans working with a youth artist at Red Rocks



Painting by youth artist Albert Ortega



Photograph by youth artist Sulaiman Shabazz



Painting by youth artist Neteru Davis

THANK YOU!

The We Still Live project at Arts Street@YEA was generously supported by: The Denver Foundation's Arts Affinity Group, Denver Housing Authority, the City and County of Denver's Office of Children's Affairs, the Harvey Family Foundation, the Sheila Fortune Foundation, Denver Arts and Venues Imagine 2020, Denver Public Schools Career Launch, Ancestry.com and RedLine Contemporary Art Center

Arts Street would also like to give a great deal of thanks to those who inspired, developed and led the *We Still Live* project: JC Futrell, Thomas Evans, Chelsea Romaniello, Jody Chapel, Yokabed Ogbai and all of our ancestors.

As well as many thanks to our guest artists, speakers, partners and volunteers: Paul Hamilton, Toluwanimi Obiwole, Blake Jackson, Carlos Frésquez, Javier Flores, Stella Yu, Carol Hart, Edna Futrell, Monica Datta, Emma Byers, Emily Takimoto, Monica Schultz, Sean Trujillo/Chicano Humanities and Arts Council.

Finally, the biggest thanks to our *We Still Live* youth artists whose enthusiasm, curiosity, talent and hard work produced an amazing project with long lasting impact.

The world is in good hands with these young people leading the way.



WE STILL LIVE!



ARTS AFFINITY GROUP
THE DENVER FOUNDATION



DENVER
CHILDREN'S AFFAIRS

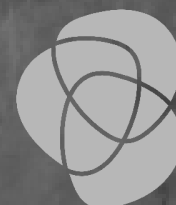


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