

WORKSHOPS

The festival kicks off with several workshops. This is a great opportunity for you to meet each other. Each poet can participate in up to three workshops through the day. Below are workshop descriptions, as well as the schedule.

Beau Sia // Beau Sia Sees Your Future

Beau Sia will be facilitating a workshop for participants to examine their work under the lens of determining their future. There will be less writing and more listening in this workshop. Questions will be discussed. Join two-time National Slam Champion, Tony Award winner, and pop culture infiltrator (Slam, Slam Nation, Manchurian Candidate, Hitch, etc.) and peer into possibility.

“Chancellor “xero” Skidmore” // How Playas Do: An Approach to Word Play

Join the Word Play gurus and learn a method of crafting verse that amplifies the wit and brilliance of your writing through play on words. Learn to translate “flat” lines of verse into various forms of figurative language without taking away from the meaning of the original line. Come reinvigorate your language, pick apart some model poems and dialogue about poetry, homophones, homonyms, and how playas do.

SAYS (Jason Mateo, Amaya Noguera-Mujica) // Face Value: Sankofa - Looking to Pay it Forward

Come kick it with the SAYS soul rebels and encounter a hard-hitting workshop addressing issues affecting oppressed people all over the world from past to present. Face Value: Sankofa will provide folks with materials and tools to do reflect, research and collectively work together to dissect, and interact with issues of challenge and take steps to a brighter, truer future. Come if you heart for the fight!

Slangston Hughes (Team Maryland) // Anti-Biting 101

Often in this current copycat era, many spoken word artists--young and old--tend to graft someone else's tone, delivery, and performance style. This is a disservice to both artist and audience, individual and community alike! If you have seen this tendency in the culture, come through to Anti-Biting 101, where we'll help budding poets nip this unconscious tendency in the bud. We do this to ensure that young poets can develop original voices and unique styles. There is a thin line between innovation and imitation! Come through and find the difference!

Greg Corbin // Lil' Wayne: The Power of the Word

“By analyzing the writing and performance tools that have made Dwayne “Lil Wayne” Carter successful, participants will explore the power of vulnerability and truth, and how you too can adapt it to your writing/performances. Participants will also investigate how hip-hop artists, like Lil Wayne, use the power of the word to influence their audiences. Participants will discuss the role artists play in society and the importance of social responsibility and accountability, as they learn to take ownership of their voices and to fearlessly follow their instincts as writers and performance artists.”

BRAVE NEW VOICES WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

“Mike “The Poet” // Poems on the Postmodern Metropolis

Instructor will briefly discuss the complexities of 21st Century Los Angeles and other urban centers like New York City, Chicago & the Bay Area. After instructor models one of his own city poems & presents a few examples, poets will write their own city poem. It can be about Los Angeles or their own city. The poem should give lots of very specific images of the urban landscape while triggering our 5 senses.

Robin & Rose (YS Seattle) // Taming Your Clich

“Sometimes, as poets and writers, we find ourselves stuck in those nasty webs called “cliches.” Evil little bugs that crawl in our ears when we are trying to break down the wall that is writer's block. In this fun and entertaining workshop, you will learn how to tame the cliché to be your friend.”

John Blake (Richmond) // Show & Tell

“The purpose of this workshop is to discover hundreds of ways to write the same line, stanza, or even poem. “Showing” without “Telling” means allowing your reader/listener to experience the magic writers/performers have in unique approaches to imagery, metaphor, and enjambment. Join John Blake, one of Richmond, VA's poetry mainstays, to reinvent, re-present, and rediscover your writing. “Show, don't tell!”

George Watsky // Personal Spit-Shine

In a world of six billion people and counting, what does one voice matter? Is it possible (or even desirable) to be unique? How do we find ourselves in the page, and thrust a persona we can be proud of into being? How do we walk the tightrope between personal honesty and persona-building? Every time we put pen to page we make choices: What we are writing about, what form to employ, our emotional attachment to our ideas, whether to invite our enemies into the discussion, etc. etc. In order to take charge of our body of work, we must learn to challenge our own habits and make these choices with purpose. Come join wit, wunderkind, and general smart-ass George Watsky for an open conversation on the process of constructing an artistic self that touches on aesthetics, subject matter, perspective, and everything between.

Adriel Luis // The Spoken Word Stimulus Package

A career rooted in spoken word is possible. What are basic elements needed to go pro? We'll discuss booking gigs, marketing, artistic perseverance, and the other elements that go into making a living through your art. We'll also explore the history of spoken word artists who have gone beyond the mic to present spoken word innovatively. BNV veteran & ill-literacy agent Adriel Luis shares from his own illustrious experience & process. Join him and take a step towards destiny. The spoken word renaissance begins with you.

Travis Thompson (YS Hawaii) // Politics of Poetry

“Big Travis from Youth Speaks Hawaii presents a workshop for poets who want to write political poems but a) feel like they don't know where to begin / how to finish, b) feel unqualified to speak on different political issues, c) don't see the point in creating political art. This workshop shows how the personal is political & attempts to decolonize the artist eye beyond borders, where the local becomes global. From the shores of Honolulu to the Gulf of Mexico to the Persian Gulf, politics has a hand in the narrative, what will your story say? “The role of the revolutionary artist is to make revolution irresistible” - Toni Cade Bambara.”

Jeff Kass // Searching for Magic

We've all heard people say poems can be magical, but what does that mean? Are we talking casting spells a la Shakespeare and boil, boil, toil and trouble? Harry Potter? Jeff Kass, a veteran high school Creative Writing teacher in Ann Arbor MI and Director of Literary Arts Programs at the Neutral Zone, Ann Arbor's Teen Center, will delve into what it means to write poems that transcend the realities of present circumstances and search for something magic. Come prepared to write.

Kuumba Lynx // SPROUT (Hip Hop Theater)

The Mighty Kuumba Lynx will lead participants through a Hip Hop Theater workshop that will include Discussion, Writing, and Performance technique. The workshop will culminate with group pieces that Spit Powerful Rhymes Organically Unleashing Truths! Chicago heads know how hard the Lynx are! Their influence on the City of Big Shoulders has been monumental. If you've ever wondered what it is that makes Chi City so raw, come check this workshop and meet the sisters who birthed a poetic generation!

Isaac Miller & Ben Alfaro // The City & The Word

Join BNV champ Isaac Miller & Ann Arbor heavyweight Ben Alfaro as they use examples from hip hop, spoken word, and page poetry, to discuss the stereotypes and realities of the cities that we live in. We'll talk about the way that our stories are shaped by the cities that we live in, and the way that cities are also shaped by our stories. We'll talk about how poetry can be a form of urban history and story-telling, and a tool through which we (re)imagine what our cities can become. Finally, we'll use personification to write poems to our cities, drawing on our examples and the conversation in the room for inspiration.

Molly Raynor & Donte Clark (Making Waves) // "How We Can Fight Back: Poetry Against Police Brutality"

In this workshop, we will explore the topic of police brutality by comparing the beating of Rodney King in LA to the recent shooting of Oscar Grant in Oakland. We will look at the community dynamics that shaped each case- tension between races, between police and residents, between media representations and reality. Once we have grappled with the history and context- the causes of police brutality- we will discuss the effects that it has on us, on our communities. We'll look at the spectrum of ways that people reacted to the Rodney King and Oscar Grant cases- from violence to education; from riots to plays, and figure out what kind of change we can make through the power of poetry.

Jerry Quickley // Stories & Moments: Making Poems From Your Life

Jerry is one of the illest poets in country, hands down. He has toured all over the world (from NY to Helsinki), been thoroughly documented (Night of Ferocious Joy, Spit, SlamNation!, Poetic Justice, etc.), puts it down on the page (Spoken Word Revolution: Slam, Hip Hop, & the Voice of New Generation; Twilight of Empire: Responses to Occupation), has a one man show based on his experiences in Iraq, and has an upcoming graphic novel. Come build with Jerry and mine personal history, poetic narrative, persona, pure lyrics, and how your life makes masterpieces.

Thea Monyee // "In The Moment: Connecting to Your Voice and Your Audience"

"This workshop is very interactive and requires a willingness to explore vulnerability, and to be supportive and constructive for the other participants. The facilitator challenges the participants to identify the purpose, goal, and inspiration for their work, and assist with clarifying those areas to improve the connection with the audience.

The session will include deconstructing work, performing in front of others, offering feedback, and more than anything, honesty. In the past, it has been a very intense, but memorable experience for the participants and the facilitator."

Joe Hernandez Kolski // I'LL TELL IT LIKE IT IS

Joe will be honest with you and help you find the truth in your work. Bring a piece that you've been working on (maybe struggling with) and you and Joe will have fun discussing it. No holds barred. You will break down the writing and performance aspects. You will gain skills to help you create honest work void of all of the spoken word performance clichés.

Marc Bamuthi Joseph // Family Portraits

An opportunity to find family healing through verse and movement. Accessing the work of author Toni Morrison and choreographer Rennie Harris, participants will be led through an engaged artistic experience that creates safe space for release of family tensions. Bamuthi is the Artistic Director of Youth Speaks Inc. Smithsonian Institute's Innovation Award winner. USA Rockefeller Fellow. M'kai's dad.

Gina Loring // Look the demon in the eye, and sucker punch that MF with a poem

Poetry as an empowering, therapeutic tool "I will lead the students through some writing exercises using poetry and creative writing as a way to deal with and overcome personal challenges. I'll share my own examples of poems I've written about traumatic or difficult issues (abuse, growing up without a father, dealing with the death of my brother, etc.) and lead the students through a "brainstorm" of words and images to jump-start their own poems. They will then have ample time to write, and later share and discuss each other's work.

We may deal with some heavy stuff, but humor is also a part of the process, so the workshop won't be a downer. Entirely ;) It's really about channeling pain into poetry, and finding a healthy outlet for the F'ed up things that happen in life."

Queen GodIs // ""What You Talkin' 'Bout Willis?!"

"Observe. Write. Edit. Perform. Repeat. This is the typical order of things, but 'Different Strokes' for Different Poets! In this (non-traditional) workshop, we will 'flip the script' and explore how performance can actually help us edit our pieces, improve our writing, and subsequently enhance both our observations and our living. Participants are required to bring in one short spoken word piece (typed and memorized - 1 min max), and will be guided through a series of questions and listening exercises to help hone in on intention, message and impact. ALL MC'S ARE EXTRA WELCOME! (RIP GC)"

Asia Rainey (Word Play New Orleans) // Spit Hot Fire

"Come through to learn the necessary art of revision, performance poetry composition, and ""cliche-busting."" Same old language got you down? Join Word Play New Orleans's esteemed director and founder, Asia Rainey, as she hunts down clichés & turns them into powerful lines and quick concept-building tools. Learn how to go from talking 'bout how you ""spit hot fire"" and actually ignite pages and engulf stages in undeniable heat."

Rafael Casal // The Progression

Come prepared to speak, to move, to connect. Join nationally renowned multidisciplinary artist & educator (& BNV legend) Rafael Casal aka (Mr. Getback) and explore the transition from traditional performance poetry to full length narratives, through the investigation of common threads between different popular mediums. Examine the intersections of language and movement, and how they can meet on the stage to tell our stories.

Green My Parents // Utilizing the World Wide Web for a World Wide Impact

Nearly 50% of youth use Facebook and 67% can access the web over their cell phone. Parents think Facebook, Twitter, Youtube and other social networking sites cause kids to waste time. GreenMyParents youth champions will show you how to use social networking sites to share your poetry with the world. Learn how to effectively use Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, and YouTube.

Brandon Santiago / Lauren Whitehead // Speak Green

For those looking to place a poem in next year's Speak Green extravaganza, this is your joint. Join Youth Speaks' young bosses Lauren Whitehead and Brandon Santiago and get a leg up on next year's competition. Come kick it with the present, and write yourself into a greener future. Create environmentally-themed poems and find the connection between the ecology and self-knowledge.

Robbie Q // Charlie Brown vs Jesus

In the poetry slam world, we are often yelled at from the stage to live our lives a certain way or to feel bad about a certain tragedy, which can turn outsiders away from the slam, and after time, jade insiders to legitimate pain and suffering. Using the lens of Scott McCloud's comics theory, Robbie's workshop will explore the ways in which art can (perhaps should) be a fresh conversation with an audience, as opposed to a one-sided ranting monologue that will inevitably alienate you from your readers/listeners, even if you get 10s for the rest of your life. In case you haven't noticed, Robbie Q. Telfer is one of the most intelligent and well-dressed men on the planet. He will be facilitating this workshop.

Mindy Nettiffee // Art of the Poet Crush

Great writing stems from an intense connection to the emotional and physical geography of where you live and what lives in you. It also stems from a passionate, obsessive love of other peoples' work. This workshop explores the strange alchemy of how crushing hard on other poets will make you a better writer -- helping you identify what is unique about your own voice and your own story, unlocking the secret poet ninja tools you need to express it, and making other writers fall just as hard for you in return.

Mayda del Valle // Connecting to Your Authentic Voice

The act of writing is an often solitary and profoundly personal act where we can safely explore complex emotions and experiences. As performers we must bring these personal stories to a public forum in a way that not only moves the audience, but that resonates with our original vision and intention for the piece. In this workshop participants will learn to approach their work as a performance text, and use techniques that help them make more authentic emotional connections to the work, themselves, and ultimately their audience. Participants are encouraged to bring a completed piece of work they would be open to sharing.

D'Lo // An Afternoon With D'Lo

Described as a "jolt of creative and comedic energy", D'Lo is a Tamil Sri L.A.nkan-American, political theatre artist/writer, director, comedian and music producer. D'Lo has also facilitated performance and writing workshops all over the world (US, Canada, UK, Germany, Sri Lanka and India), vigorously toured the university/college circuit, and worked in regional theater throughout the US. D'Lo's latest works include "Ramble-Ations: A One D'Lo Show," and solo show "Minor D'Tales." Come commune with one of the swiftest cats around.

Hall	Room	Session 1 10:15am – 12pm	Session 2 1:30pm – 3:15pm	Session 3 3:30pm – 5:15pm
Johnson	200	Beau Sia	Beau Sia	Beau Sia
Johnson	205		Marc Bamuthi Joseph	
Johnson	208	Greg Corbin	Greg Corbin	Greg Corbin
Johnson	209	Joe Hernandez Kolski	Joe Hernandez Kolski	Joe Hernandez Kolski
Johnson	308	Travis Thompson	Travis Thompson	Jeff Kass
Johnson	309	John Blake	John Blake	John Blake
Johnson	317	Asia Rainey	Asia Rainey	Asia Rainey
Weingart	110	Jerry Quickley	Jerry Quickley	Thea Monyee
Weingart	116	Mike "the Poet" Sonksen	Mike "the Poet" Sonksen	Robin & Rose (Youth Speaks Seattle)
Weingart	117	Mayda del Valle	Mayda del Valle	Mayda del Valle
Weingart	209	Adriel Luis	Adriel Luis	Adriel Luis
Weingart	210	Green My Parents	Green My Parents	L. Whitehead & B. Santiago (Youth Speaks SF)
Fowler	108	"Xero" Skidmore	"Xero" Skidmore	"Xero" Skidmore
Fowler	111	Robbie Q	Robbie Q	Robbie Q
Fowler	112	D'Lo	D'Lo	D'Lo
Fowler	201	Molly Raynor & Donte Clark	Molly Raynor & Donte Clark	Molly Raynor & Donte Clark
Fowler	202	Queen Gods	Queen Gods	Queen Gods
Fowler	207	SAYS	SAYS	SAYS
Fowler	209	George Watsky	George Watsky	George Watsky
Fowler	210	Slangston Hughes	Slangston Hughes	Slangston Hughes
Fowler	301	Kuumba Lynx	Kuumba Lynx	Kuumba Lynx
Fowler	310	Isaac Miller & Ben Alfaro	Isaac Miller & Ben Alfaro	Isaac Miller & Ben Alfaro
Booth	119	Mindy Nettiffee	Mindy Nettiffee	Mindy Nettiffee
Booth	204	Rafael Casal	Rafael Casal	Rafael Casal
Booth	208	Gina Loring	Gina Loring	Gina Loring