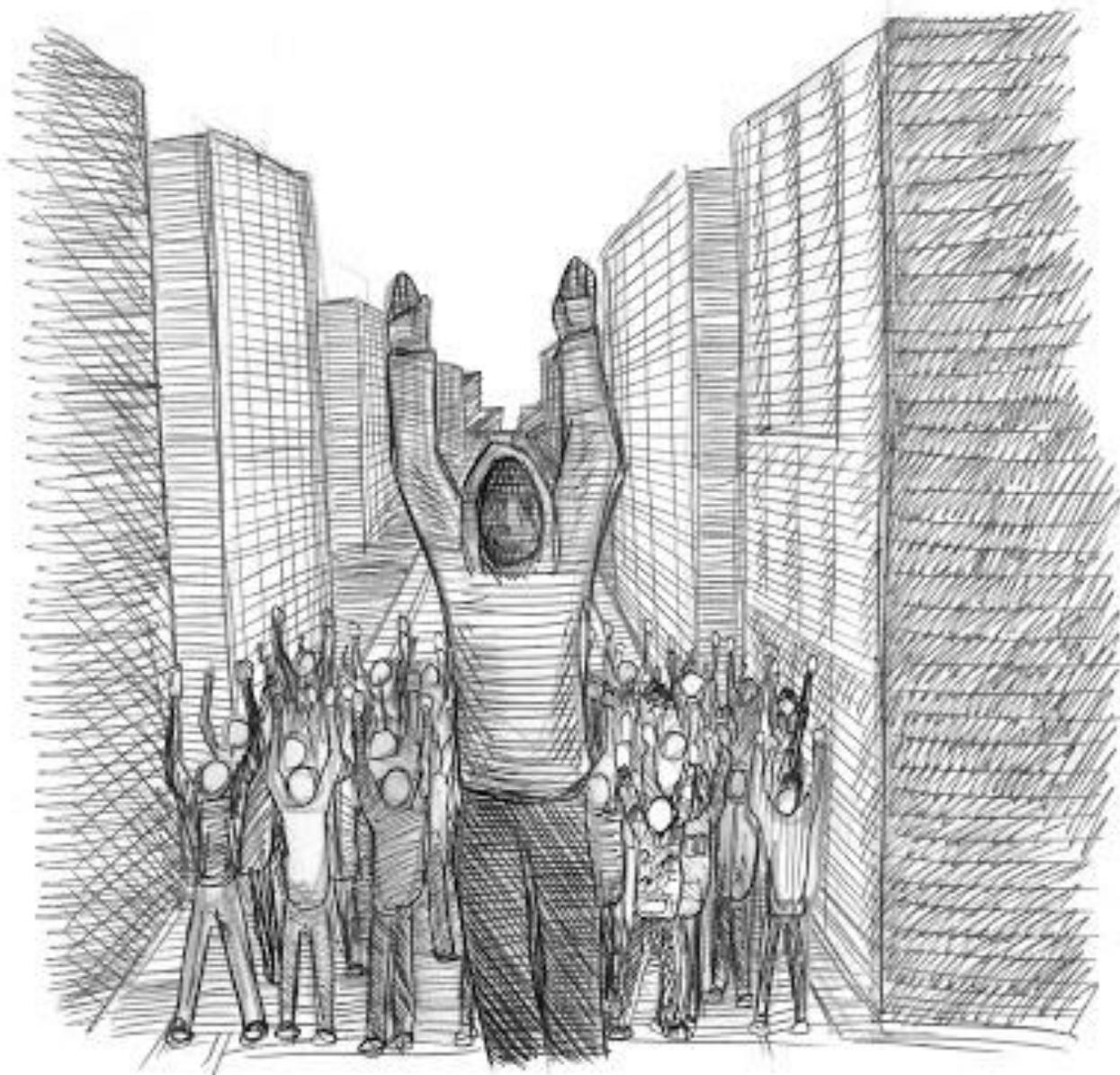


Stone's Throw



The Ferguson Issue

Issue #2

December 2014

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"The Ferguson Issue"

Contributing Poets

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Navah the Buddaphliii
Rachel Copans
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Chad Parenteau
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Freak Machine Press, Boston, MA

Introduction

My thanks to everyone who contributed to this issue. Particularly cover artist Adric Giles and the poet who introduced me to him, DiDi Delgado, who also introduced me to a number of poets who are part of this issue. There is good a reason she is in here twice. Rest assured you will see her in this journal again, though maybe in a different capacity.

Furthermore, there's a good reason everyone's work is in this journal.

Maybe it's the false security blanket of not having George W. Bush in the white house, but I have mostly shied away from directly political poems for a long time. In this age of copying, reblogging and reimagining preexisting work ad infinitum, to actually think you could create something new and then attempt it seemed to me the most political act you could accomplish.

When Michael Brown was killed in Ferguson, Missouri, the poetry world was bombarded with the reactions of countless poets, the likes of which I haven't seen since before the U.S. invaded Iraq in 2003. This was accompanied by a passionate display of activism I haven't seen since the 2000 elections.

Such energy is inspiring, contagious and shouldn't go undocumented.

As a venue host and editor, I've tried to gather as much of this important work for as possible as large an audience as I can gather. What you'll read here is just a small time-capsule sized sample of work that's worth discovering now.

—*Chad Parenteau*

Cracked Candles

streets on fire
my people lit up the world
oppression burnin down
change rising up out the smoke

better days blaze ahead son
matchbox prayers finally struck home
hellfire engulfs united injustice
revolution ignited for all

let everyone witness
just how HOT we are

dying hearts rekindled
embers evolved

COAL BLACK DIVINE SPARK
you'll never put an eternal light out

so they boarded up their windows
and we still shinin through dark times

hate on our flames all day

dusted minds
still wanna be like us
except without any ashiness

can't help
my knees, elbows, hands, feet
rough, rubbed raw

been strugglin for freedom
since I was kickin in mama's womb

brotha minors
judged with full grown gavels

every action
misunderstood as ghetto evil

threatened by living proof
of the one's who've had enough

NO
won't be calm
not until y'all stop
this violent madness patrol

Where is the Love?

—*Secret Genius*

He Be Black (Michael Brown)

He be black
he be 18
he be alive
he be loved
He be innocent
he be intentionally ripped away from the be all you can be
he be almost going to college
But almost don't count
when his
killer of hope and life and all possibilities
Be police officer
Be races
Be hater
Be one that lack patience, lack understanding
and lack the ability to be a hero
and the wisdom to protect and serve
he be murderer that shot and killed 18 yr old black male
I want to know did he not think Michael brown had parents
Or did he just not think
Not think
That his action would leave parent broken
Making their torn hearts the highlight
Of CNN News
Parent be what the fuck
Parents be crying
Parents be in pain
Parents be devastated
Parents be burying 18 yr old son
Police officer hate is what you sleep with at night
and Fear is what fuels your heart
But I learned one hates only what one fear
And police officer you build up an enormous amount of fear for 18 yr old black males
Walking down streets not on sidewalks talking and smiling
About favorite foods, sports and video games
perhaps how good it feels to be

A 18 yr old black male graduated from
High School and on his way to college
Coward I mean police Office
Did you know 18 yr old black males fear guns
The type of guns you carry
Shoot shoot shoot shoot shoot shoot
Police officer
you be shooting 18 yr old black male
Did you not think he mattered
or did you just not think how
He be black, he be 18
He be innocent
He be a live
he be loved
He be murdered
By you police officer
he be taken to soon
He be dead lying in the street for hours
He be Michael Brown
and now we be fighting for Justice for Him

—*Navah the Buddaphliiii*

A Start

The most haunting phrase I've heard is
"history repeats itself"
We have seen it with voting rights
We have seen it with wars
But we seem to forget the wars happening today
Happening here
We are still repeating history
Whether it be centuries
Decades
Even hours

Every 28 hours an unarmed person of color is killed by police
Recently, many people can spit this factoid
And they say they're annoyed
But why are people still dying?

I heard that gunfire rings as if it owns the city
That disparities are distributed like germs
I heard the air is made of tear gas and mace
That there is no space for those cries to be heard
But people are screaming louder than ever

As voices finally raise
They lift others with them
Flooding the streets that have been flooded with blood

I heard the majority white police force rules a majority
non-white community
They have tear gas and tanks
They once beat a man and sued him for destroying government
property
Because his blood got on their uniforms

They have attacked people
Shot people
Who did not pose a threat
Yet it is still said that the shooting was defense

Even when a young man holds his hands in the air
The police take this as an open door to his body
Crashing through it with bullets

Silenced screams have come to the surface
Joined by a chorus of supporters
But people forget there are more untold stories

Mangled bodies
Stinging eyes
Suffocating on chemicals

But we can destroy the chains
It takes one voice to raise the volumes of others
One body rising joins hands that join hands that join hands

The greatest lesson we can learn from history is
We need to start learning from history

—*Rachel Copans*

A Trial by the Fire

Another night.
Another fire.
Violence.
Gunshots.
Blazing embers.
Remembering
when we were unified
together.

The streets are on fire in Ferguson.
Broken hearts and backs batoned.
Peaceful protests, long gone.

Running gasoline in the streets.
Hard to be.
Hard to leave.
Hard to believe.
Hard to see.
Freedom leaving Ferguson.

Freedom already went
when the sentence
didn't make sense
and the guilty set free.
Just us, know the truth
Lady justice is blind.

A murder in Ferguson.
No justice.

Remember
Michael Brown.

The burned down buildings
will be a reminder.

That Justice has left the city screaming
And no one knows where to find her.

Worried that the ruling
gas made justice blinder.
Definitely lost a lot of hope
in a trial by the fire.

In the smoke I see fleeing angels
and hear them sing hymns.
Tears cried in the cathedrals.
Prayers in the streets for the victims.

Please
deliver us from evil.

We need shovels in Buffalo
And healing in the streets of Ferguson

prayers of hope and
heal the hearts
of those broken.

Heal those wounds left open
in the freezing winter weather.
Lets unify
and build.

Build the broken
in Ferguson.

We need to rebuild
together.

—*Jason Wright*

A War of My Own :

Poem from "Staying on 94: Tales from a Misguided Soul"

I don't need to go to Iraq, when I'm in a war of my own
Watching a new dream here be shattered with chrome
Going on is all of this shit that we can't condone
Yet there's a Judas in every crew,
And it's worse when you're alone.
How are we going to accept these visuals, influencing intellectuals?
Who think we're a bunch of animals, because of some individuals?
This is critical, people not wanting to hear any of the spirituals
And men aren't loving our women; much rather these
Materials.
See on this side, we're gentrified and don't feel saved.
chains around my neck and wrist, I'm the new America slave.
Rivals amongst my group and with others
Yet how are we enemies and we're suppose to be brothers
And why are we hitting our women? Aren't we supposed to be lovers?
Have we really stooped down to disgracing our mothers?

Before that, my ancestors were being whipped on their back
Even that wasn't me; I can still feel that blood from the stripped skin
Off my Back.
I can still feel the pain and the scars are not done
I'm Kunta in my own way, trying to run for freedom
But there is none. Everywhere I go there are dead ends and roadblocks
"The others" going through walls when they Milwaukee,
And "Buck" shots.
They're quick to catch Kobe but not the murders of Biggie and Pac
By this you can find out who's in and who's not
And these same people planned for me to follow in their Path
With my light skin, but I can't follow in their path 'cause of my past
So under my eyes are bags while my fathers wore rags
And they still get mad because I stay glad
Then they wonder why we get stuck in the system
Live and die by the system, get screwed by the system
So we say fuck "your" system

I've already been handed a "hood" death sentence
I don't need to be retold with a judge and jury in my presence.
See sometimes tv convincing but if i'm not me,
I have Latin people, Asian people, and even White people
Who want to be me.

Is there something they see that I'm just blind to?
Or is it because they're getting tired of being viewed?
See you want to get mad when I call most of these authorities thieves
But don't forget you stole me and this land you call "the free"
So lets get this straight this isn't the land of the free
This is the land of the prison and
legal criminals and I can't leave
Where I can't breathe in the truth, just inhale lies
outside see the facade, swarming to this rotting country like flies
But I don't like them taking what's mine
Is that the capitalist in me, or a part of me conditioned to die
I can't decide, but I need to stop complaining about me
Because there are immigrants that want to be
Where I be.

—*D. Ruff*

After

Grand Jury preannounce
carries soundtrack swell.

Klans of Twitters tweet
sweet for satellite sweeps

eyeing outrage preset
to flame. Here we go!

Herald chimes Boston
quiet in wake of hearing.

I sleep too soon in silence
leave oven on.

Girlfriend wakes in time
douses hell's white heat.

Next to section eight housing
where fireworks snap you to sleep

from June to October
sleep uncrackled.

dream averted wake
three families claimed

armchair aristocrats
deeming neighbors animal

us patron saints status quo
Boston little less quiet.

—*Chad Parenteau*

Pennies

Throw us in the change bucket.
Let us clink together and jingle jangle
until our copper scent wafts
to the nostrils of your morals,
straight from the bottom.
You rub us the wrong way.
Mad because you brought us here naked
clothed and made us civilized,
Our sagging pants defy you dude?
Daquan and them's just trying to find
The courage to bring that fad back
You keep us bottom of bags
You let crumbs collect around our heads,
all of your bullshit suffocating the fuck
out of our worth, until you need us...
need to breed us to be entertained,
we corner store candy to your gluttonous feasts,
We Boston Arizona Iced Tea Parties
We Ferguson Skittles scattered on concrete after
Whatever happened at a convenience store.
We "good parts" of
Roxbury, Dorchester and Mattapan,
why I need to explain to my white friends
that I'm the same type of black
as those who who stand
on hood corners and sling,
you ever been slung?
We ain't never been skiing.
You need us to pacify
your soul's cleanliness with God
when the homeless woman asks you
for spare change and you spare her
Your "I did something good starter package"
you hand her 25 of us with the lint
and empty gum rappers

from forgotten corners in your pocket
You need us to get by,
To get through tolls,
pay exact change on what something costs.
Money is money honey, you say.
All lives matter, you say.
When's the last time you paid your rent in pennies?
Our high numbers are worth more
than your weight in a stack of dollar dollar bills ya'll
but somewhere down the line
somebody told us we something we ain't
That we something to hate
Something to fear
That we should aspire to be something else
Look like, act like, you "talk white"
My skin say you lying to feel comfortable
your privilege is suffocating you
why you twerking, tanning and talken bout
who's yo' nigga...
when the truth is
not even niggas
wanna be niggas.
See we got Indian in our family.
If all lives matter
then you won't mind
if I move in with you right?
The South End was our home
but your greed got the best of you.
You MAD about METCO
Bout how we bussing these kids
out of the ghetto
The same kind of mad when Boston
desegregated the schools
We want our kids to live a better life
but you laugh and point
Say... we still monkeys
But monkey see what monkey do
that's why when this monkey see

what your monkey ass do,
I do it better than you
I make it fresher than you
I mentos your freshmaker
I cardiac arrest you
put you on that pacemaker
but you're smarter than me
I gotta give you that
cause you know to make a dollar off my 15 cents.
You was doing it on the auction block
You was doing it - slave ships
Amistad
30 years a slave,
now I'm awoke
We gon' get our pennies in order
We gon' need you to
Get your weight up.

—*DiDi Delgado*

White on Rice

Didn't need a receipt

Didn't fit any suspect descriptions

Didn't get searched

Didn't get any looks walking through the neighborhood

Didn't think about it

Didn't get harassed for walking down the street

Didn't have a cop watch me

Didn't have a gun pointed at me

Didn't have to put my hands up

Didn't get shot

Didn't realize what I

Didn't have to worry about

—*Andrew Borne*

Immigration (Go Back to Europe)

They say "No More immigration"
They say they want to save our great nation
from folks who can't speak English
For the indigenous peoples of this land
"No More immigration" is a long unanswered wish
Protect the Texas border,
uphold decency and order
but Texas WAS part of Mexico
before the USA stole it away
Yes, I remember the Alamo
and so do they
Go Back to Europe!
We could all yell
Since for some the American dream is a living hell
They pit the browns against the Blacks
So we won't have the energy to attack racism at it's very core
When you sort by skin color it's easy to make sure
Who you want to keep rich
Who you want to make poor
It's far too easy for them to sift us out by our looks
They make us feel like we are beggars
for asking back what they took
I'm not stealing or robbing when I reclaim what is mine
Though they lie and say I committed a crime
Go back to Europe!
We could all scream
since you have to be white
to achieve the American dream
Without pay my ancestors helped to build this country so rich
Yet when I'm assertive to further my career
I'm called a bossy Black bitch
The cultured northern whites won't dare say that to my face
But their expressions clearly show their distaste
Now that the country is starting to return to brown
White America is afraid its values will drown

Go Back to Europe! We should all shout
Take back our land, push them all out
Go back to Europe!
We could demand, reclaim our dignity
Take back our land

—*Radiant Jasmin*

WeMattersYEAHWeMatters

rebuttal to a social media post that said and I quote "As much as cops suck, cancer and the Fed are a bigger problem"

Dear DeeJay LightSkint,

....who Mustaforgot Frankie Knuckles - inventor of House Music
(he Black inventive Life)

....or how Lacking Henrietta's children - STILL are- digression diGRESSION

....and when you write "As much as cops suck" that actually belittles mi Sobrinos My Daddy My Cousins
Them Knuckles Brown Lives

...We's Matter OUR MUSIC is your Inspiration - well - at least maybe the AfriCANBaseLines

...and they killing Your inspiration in STREETS Daily - you care / or are you inspired enuff...already

....does your minor success in PeachWashedWorld force your forgetfulNess bout our AntiBlack System
(Sometimes it forces Mine - I'll admit it)

...and you who deeJaySweetly, who I'll dance to on occasion
on A LANE ----in sum city

....inna club where hip-hop (invented by My Peeps) got b-boys spinning to your Afroid beats (cause your
muSick in ParTICKular is BlackLike)

....are you actually "passing", if yes

.... stay out the SummerSun OR you ChocolateNess will miss yourCabYourJobYourLifeInTrouble if you
pop Mouth Spicy to Da Man

....when the poet wondered upon meeting him 'is he Black' STARE
'cause he could pass' - almost like my Daddy can

.....SO now eye can ask...are you Black . . .be honest Cmonnnnn

(love our music/ makeMoneyOffa /and Looooove our Music dough)

well are you Black . . .you can tell me

....How Many Bars Hun - How manyBARS to transition (I know this instinctively)

...and youse may say Dag whyYouSoSeriousFor - yaOuttaLineBrownie-----yet

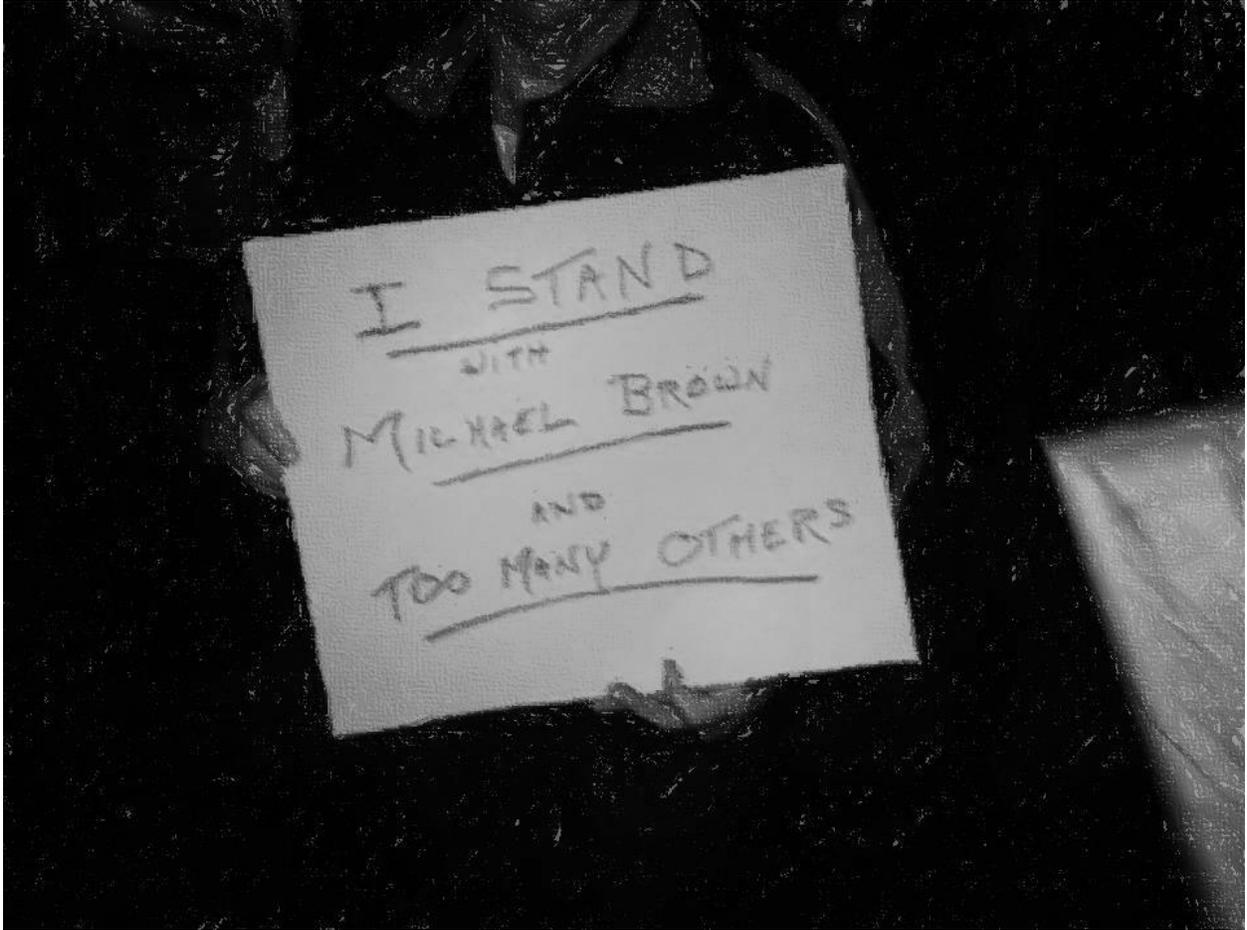
....I wonder if them Hott club Posters ever featured CoCo Flesh Plus AfroBooTay on 'em - wud "they" still come (they may) -

...but Meh - we all have our preferences....

....when You Know - confused UnFreaks would make said A-Double-Ess all political instead of Sexy

....Cause Black Life Matters - and 'MeriKKKa, and the world and folk in this sphere Cops a sucky attitude and say - it aint so

—*Toni Bee*



Who's Mike Brown?

Burgeoning college student shot six times.

Hey Mike, how do we not forget you?

How long til' you know who's Mike Brown?

There will be many yous

There will be black and brown salty-teared peppered face unarmed youths.

Sea coasts filled with the slain in vains.

They will forget you & the many yous Mike.

They will add your name to lists and say

We ain't violating EVERYONE'S civil rights.

This keeps black folks unaffected, asking

Who's Mike Brown?

—*DiDi Delgado*