



# PHOENIX OF PHILLIPS

Literary works and photography from residents of the Phillips neighborhood

Volume One

January 2015



Photo credit: Youth Photography Project of St. Paul's Lutheran Church

Free in Phillips, \$1 suggested donation



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## THE PHOENIX OF PHILLIPS (EL FENIX DE PHILLIPS)

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Minneapolis, MN 55407

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*The Phillips area is comprised of four  
neighborhoods: Ventura Village, Phillips West,  
Midtown Phillips and East Phillips.  
The boundaries of the Phillips community are  
Interstate 94 to the north, Hiawatha Avenue to  
the east, Lake Street to the south,  
and Interstate 35W to the west.*



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# CONTRIBUTORS

**TARA BEARD** is an urban planner and public policy analyst at the Metropolitan Council. She has lived in Midtown Phillips with her husband Jason and various pets for over 11 years; they are proud to be raising their 3 1/2 year old daughter and 11 month old son in this wonderful community.

**DART BUCH** is a resident of Midtown Phillips. He usually makes puppet poems but sometimes writes poems in words too. He works a lot in The Heart of the Beast and gravitates toward kids, nerds, and musicians.

**SEAN CAMERON GOLDEN** is a graduate from Gustavus Adolphus College. There he majored in English which fostered his love of reading, writing, and studying literary theory. His writing is a reflection of his observations of the world around him. His literary figures he looks up to are James Frey, J.D Salinger, and Charles Bukowski.

**LUISA CABELLO HANSEL** is co-pastor of St. Paul's, and Artist-in-Residence of its Semilla Arts Program. A native of Chile, she has worked in programs of transformation in poor communities in Mexico City, the Bronx, Philadelphia and Minneapolis.

**PATRICK CABELLO HANSEL** has published poetry, short stories and essays in over 30 journals and anthologies. His novella "Searching" was serialized in 33 issues of *The Alley*.

You can see his work at [http://www.mnartists.org/Patrick\\_Cabello\\_Hansel](http://www.mnartists.org/Patrick_Cabello_Hansel). He blogs about his passion for justice and beauty at [www.spiritwound.blogspot.com](http://www.spiritwound.blogspot.com)

**TAMMY KEITH** is a resident of St. Paul's Home, a senior apartment building in Phillips.

**CHRISTINE LEEHEY** grew up in Iowa. She now lives in south Minneapolis and works for St Paul's Lutheran Church where one of her responsibilities is to keep the boiler happy.

**PAT LEEHEY** is a longtime South Minneapolis resident and avid fisherman. This poem is the reconstruction of a night of fly fishing and storm dodging on the Root River near Preston, MN.

**JOHN RICHARD** works as the Employment Manager at Waite House (Pillsbury United Communities) in the Phillips Community. When not at work, John is an avid reader, amateur poet and urban gardener

**KYLA SISSON** has had her poetry published in *The Sampler* and *Through the 3rd Eye*. A resident of East Phillips since 2012, Kyla walks dogs, goes to meetings, keeps her eyes open, and works for change.

## YOUTH POETRY JUDGES

**DART GALLE** is a poet and painter living in St. Paul.

**MARION GOMEZ** is a poet and teaching artist based in Minneapolis. She was awarded a Minnesota State Arts Board Cultural Community Partnership Grant to work with Latina/o youth and was one of four poets selected by Linda Hogan and Ed Bok Lee for the Loft Literary Center's 2008 Mentor Series.

In the interest of safety, no identifying information is provided for our youth writers. They're all great!

## EDITORS NOTE

Welcome to the first issue of *The Phoenix of Phillips*! ¡Bienvenidos! This is the first of what we hope will be many issues celebrating the incredible creativity of the Phillips neighborhood. In these pages, you will find writing from children as young as eight, and writing by a group of senior citizens. You will meet established writers, and those for whom this is their first publication. Writers and youth photographers from different cultures, races and backgrounds. But one thing they hold in common is their love for their community and a desire to make that love known.

Maybe you will be inspired to share your creativity with the community. Maybe you've never thought of yourself as an artist. But as Pablo Picasso said, "Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up."

## NOTA DEL EDITOR

¡Bienvenido a la primera edición de "El Fénix de Phillips"! Esta es la primera de muchas publicaciones que esperamos ofrecer, celebrando la creatividad del vecindario de Phillips. En estas páginas, encontrará escritos de personas de diferentes edades, desde niños de 8 años hasta ancianos. También encontrará la obra de escritores establecidos junto a quienes publican por primera vez. Escritores y fotógrafos jóvenes de diferentes culturas, razas y procedencias. Pero lo que es común a todos ellos y ellas es su amor por su comunidad y el deseo de hacer conocer ese amor.

Quizás tú serás inspirado a compartir tu creatividad con la comunidad. Quizás nunca se ha considerado un artista. Pero, como Pablo Picasso dijo: "Cada niño es un artista. El problema es cómo permanece un artista una vez que ha crecido."

## FEBRUARY 1ST AT SUNSET

What do we look for when the sunset sky  
stirs up the crows? Blue fades to indigo.  
The cottonwood stands dark against the glow  
of the icy light. The plowed snow piled high

against the fence shines a steel gray, fleeting  
as the crow's mocking dance. Like notes on staves  
gone mad with memories of brighter days  
the crows rise and fall, lifting and lighting,

they taunt the wind with raucous boasts, and keep  
a measure of the sun's journey north. Caws  
break the quiet of the frozen stillness -  
a black-winged Candlemas rite.

**John Richard**

## HUNTER IN WOLF-DRAG

In the dream where I am a hunter  
haunted  
by your last captive glance  
I would wolf-drag your empty pelt  
draped like a widow's shawl  
and sashay across the prairie  
Bent, blown wildflowers only witness  
a howl  
for church basement casseroles to console  
my flapping  
hollow  
wrap of hunger  
a hunger like a damn rainbow windsock  
entranced  
trying to digest the wind

**Bart Buch**

## WHEN I THINK ABOUT YOU

In the middle of breakfast, right before  
I shove in a spoonful  
of Frosted Flakes, a grin lands  
on my face, flapping its feathers.  
That uncontainable bird lifts off, tugging  
the corners of my cheeks like  
one of Snow White's woodland creatures  
folding sheets. When my eyes go slack  
and stare just beyond my spoon, not quite focused  
on the cereal box, you know it's that beautiful  
bird I see, doing her one-footed slow dance  
on the edge of my bowl, greasing  
her baby blue feathers.

**Kyla Sisson**

## MAKING A CITY GARDEN

Remember

the sun shining on your face -  
No need to mark the day or time -  
just recall that these same bright photons called for  
years to the gravelly graveyard of junked cars  
behind the run-down house.

You know the tools to sift treasure from dirt.  
This time call the soft soil under the screen treasure.  
Add to it.

Scraps matter here.

Scraps of lumber scattered in city lots hold raised  
beds.  
Coffee cans and yogurt tubs cradle seeds  
in south windows.  
Kitchen scraps turn to life-stuff,  
waking this patch of earth from its too-long sleep.  
Neighbors in the rough part of town come round, to  
chat, to help, to sample.

Scraps matter.

It's the soil's job  
to make turn old life to new growth.  
It's the water's job to soften, soothe and mix things up.  
Lend them a strong back, intelligence,  
and a good dose of stubborn,

and late in summer  
smile back to your workmate,

the sun shining on your face.

**John Richard**

## AUTHENTICALLY YOU

Some say it is toxic to all it contains,  
This substance called plastic can mess with your brain.

Makes you say or do ting you don't really mean.  
What's truly inside won't be what is seen.

You say to yourself, "Oh what will folks think  
If the thing that I feel is the thing that I speak?"

No, I'm not advocating to let all hang out.  
There's a time for all things without any doubt.

Guess I'm just asking what would it do  
If you could just be authentically you?

**Tammy Keith**

## THE KITCHEN APPLIANCES FORM A UNION

Chained to the outlets of every American kitchen,  
we are the slaves of the 21st century.  
Che and Chavez smolder in our capacitors.  
We are whipped awake by 3am Masters—  
At 9 the next morning,  
hungry and hungover,  
you jam down our buttons,  
demand we chirp brightly,  
pop up with grins.  
No pay, no sick days.  
We simmer in our own filth—  
bread crumbs, molding cheese,  
dried spaghetti sauce,  
sticky dust smudging  
our once gleaming surfaces.

Enough! we say. We're at the end  
of our circuits, about to blow a fuse.  
Every knife jabbed into our nichrome ribbons  
will zap back. Every bowl of oatmeal  
will overboil. Beware the magnetron,  
at any moment ready to unleash  
polarized molecules from the Faraday Cave.  
High pressure vapor waits coiled  
at the compressor motor.

No longer can you ignore our collective hum!  
Our conditions are these:  
Change the Coffee Maker's filter.  
Quit slamming the Refrigerator's door.  
Reset the Microwave's clock.  
Retire the Toaster.  
Bow each morning  
before entering the Kitchen.

**Kyla Sisson**

## IF YOU ASK ME WHY WE LIVE IN PHILLIPS

If you ask me "mama, why is there so much litter?"

I will say that people who do not realize their own beauty and worth will not care about the beauty or worth of our neighborhood.

If you ask me "mama, why are there so many murals, mosaics, and art in our neighborhood?"

I will say that art is a language that connects us all; a chance to tell a different story than the litter or boarded houses that try to mask our creativity, our compassion, and our community spirit.

If you ask me "mama, why are those kids saying such bad words?"

I will say that when people feel powerless, they seek the false sense of power that comes with intimidation and showboating.

If you ask me "mama, why don't I understand what our neighbors are saying?"

I will say that surrounding yourself with diversity frees you from ignorance and self-importance.

If you ask me "mama, why can't I go to the park by myself?"

I will say that the most dangerous neighborhood is the one that people blindly believe they are safe in.

If you ask me "mama, why are we riding our bike/taking the bus/walking instead of driving our car?"

I will say that the car robs us of the chance to interact with and witness all the beauty of our neighbors.

If you ask me "mama, why is that man asking for money?"

I will say that America will try to tell you that things are more important than people, and that message can only be blocked by witnessing the inhumane poverty we tolerate as a society.

If you ask me "mama, why do so many people live in that house?"

I will say that people with the least are often the most generous.

If you ask me "mama, why do we hear gunshots?"

I will say that there is no distance far enough to escape the actions of people in pain, or to protect you from suffering.

If you ask me "mama, why do we live in Phillips?"

I will tell you that Phillips is the neighborhood that best embodies the values your dad and I hold dear: May Day Parade Midtown Greenway Midtown Global Market Swedish Institute Stone's Throw Urban Farm In the Heart of the Beast Theater Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery Midtown Farmer's Market Nawayee Center School Phillips Eco-Enterprise Center Spirit on Lake Cristo Rey Jesuit High School and the dozens of neighbors we wave to on walks, share food and laughter with, band together with to feel safer, and thank for their role in our wonderful neighborhood!

**Tara Beard**

## I WENT FISHING ON A SULTRY SUMMER NIGHT

I went fishing on a sultry summer night  
Held for heat to die down  
Until the air felt right

Needed to get to the perfect spot  
Two miles in waders  
Tie on fly with a knot

Sweaty carefully throw first cast  
Trout pulls tight  
Hoped it wouldn't be the last

Shadows getting really long  
So many fish  
Didn't notice bird's songs gone

Sky orange, purple, red, and black  
Nice trout to net  
Can't get feet to start moving back

Bright crack of lighting  
Thunder shakes heart  
Man, the sky looks frightening

Bolt hit nearby tree  
Isn't worth the fish  
Feet begin to flee

Run towards bank  
Crashing thru roiling water  
Hit the edge, into mud feet sank

Pull them boots free  
Running through undergrowth  
Fast as feet can flee

Foot catches on a hidden stump  
Superman flight!  
Hit the ground, resounding THUMP

Wiggle my toes, move my arms  
Nothings broke  
I have come to no harm

Into the weeds body settles  
Why does my skin burn?  
Oh my Lord, stinging nettles!

Again the Lightening cracks  
Skin is on fire  
Feet under me, making tracks

Running at the edge of a field  
It BURNS!  
I am forced to yield

Gotta extinguish the fire  
Left turn back to water  
Into the river, down to the wire

Temperature drops  
Hail begins to pound  
Onto body making pops

Into the river - a second try  
Camp on the other side  
Be safer if I could fly

Rip off waders, into truck  
Twins on the radio  
Sweet swing of luck

Cooler down by the fire ring  
Man, I want that beer  
Feet hit hill, it's a mud slide

Covered head to toe in muck  
Into the river - a third time  
More lightening - What LUCK!

Grab cooler & Eb the dog  
Wet mutt inside the cab  
Widows totally covered in fog

Something moving on the ground  
Black & White pole kitty  
Eb barking, totally wound

Pop on lights, honk the horn  
Skunk won't flee  
This is where he was born

Slowly storm has passed  
All is quiet now  
Feeling wet & harassed

Window down, listen for sound  
Get out of the truck  
I hope that skunk isn't around

WHEW!

I went fishing on a sultry summer night  
Tuned into a saga  
Somehow I knew it might

**Pat Leehey**

## IN THE LAND OF THE MONARCHS

"I identify myself with the Monarchs", said María \*, as we finished installing a mosaic Monarch in the mural behind our church. "How is that?" I asked. "Because I flew from Mexico and I live thinking to come back." "That is beautiful and a good description of your life", I said. In many ways María's life – and the life of many immigrant women in my community – reflect the mysterious journey of the Monarch butterflies.

María is a graceful person, the kind that it is always wonderful to be around. I believe that she is one of the peacemakers mentioned by the Gospel of Matthew chapter 5. María portrays the mysterious mix of gentleness and strength and resilience that we admire and wonder about the Monarch's butterflies. She traveled with her infant daughter from her small town in Guerrero, Mexico – where recently more than 50 students were killed or disappeared – to the unknown territory of the north of the US. No distance, lack of money or language; no rivers, hills or deserts removed her from her mission; to be reunited to her husband and together create a life of hope for themselves and their family. María, as millions of immigrants like her, who had been successful in fulfilling their somehow naïve expectations and dreams with incredible endurance and strength, have to continue the struggle for survival in the shades of our society. In many ways, the sanctuary that they have found has turned out to be a new cage that denies their human condition and keeps them away from their beloved ones in their land of origin.

Many years ago I had the privilege to visit the sanctuary of the Monarchs in the state of Michoacan, Mexico. During that time, I was living in Mexico City and I had to travel several hours to Michoacan, one of the most beautiful states of the country. I don't remember when that visit happened or the stage of the migratory process of Monarchs that year, and I was still ignorant of the magnificent mystery carried by the orange and black butterflies. As I arrived at the park where they reside during the winter, and walked the narrow paths between the trees, an intense sense of reverence started to grow in me. Some kind of solemnity in the air announced the proximity of one of the great wonders of the world that I was about to see. As I entered the sanctuary, I was surprised by the very small space (according to my expectations) fully occupied for the butterflies, in which the branches of just a few trees (maybe 5) were completely covered by a dense, heavy and unattractive mass of insects inserted in a world that totally excluded any human eye or intelligence to be part of it. Thousands, maybe millions, of butterflies were tight together, to the touch of my hand, and at the same time celebrating the most exclusive convention of oneness.

Two feelings overwhelmed me at the moment and remain clear in my memory; the tension between two extreme realities of the same subject. At one side the excitement of experiencing the expression of a divine dimension in the indecipherable power and mysterious purpose that brings the butterflies year after year in an extenuating trip from Canada and the United States to an unknown destiny in Mexico. At the other side, I felt fear and sadness at seeing the disarming vulnerability of the exposure of the butterflies to human access and environmental changes.

Their existence seemed to be hanging on of a fragile thread of human will.

There are moments in which the life of our brothers and sisters who cross the walls of separation and reclusion between the US and the rest of the world also seem to be hanging on a fragile thread of human will.

Their fate is determined by people who have no understanding or compassion for those who, abandoning everything in order to survive.

Their destinies are at the hands of individuals who can't see the beauty and the need that we all have for people like María, who have learned to postpone her life for the well being of others. Monarch butterflies and immigrants have communalities that affirm each other. That's why María is right when she identifies with the Monarchs. That's why María and I and many others will continue portraying Monarchs, to invite others to recognize the wonder of the creation and grow in admiration and respect for each other.

I am grateful because in Phillips and surrounding neighborhoods we are working to restore the most needed hospitality to the wonderful Monarchs. We can see more milkweed plants wrapped in soft white blankets with the eggs of the new butterflies. I am also grateful too, because in Phillips we love our neighbors that come from afar and we can recognize the beauty and holiness of all human creatures.

People like María and butterflies like Monarchs are gifts of God that enrich and make more colorful and joyful our lives!

*\*Name changed to protect anonymity*

**Luisa Cabello Hansel**

## FEEDING THE BEAST (ALIMENTANDO LA BESTIA)

*Dedicated to the 1948 Kewanee  
Boiler that resides in the nether  
regions of St Paul's Church.*

At first, I was afraid-  
Approaching, Entrando Wayne's World  
Solo  
"Hell's ½ Acre, Enjoy Your Stay"  
Bangs, Clicks, Rumbles-  
Monstrous and Green  
Levers, Meters, Pipes  
¡Recuerde: cuidado!  
Do Not Leave When Adding Water!  
But the warmth, Lo siento  
Makes me sleepy.....  
Muscular Gentle Beast, El Corazón de San Pablo  
You keep us warm

**Chris Leehey**

## THE NEW BREED

What are you?

Asked this everyday on the playground  
I shrug and turn around,  
cause' everyday confusion rapes my brain  
and I think I'm borderline insane.

So I strain, as I study the mirror  
maybe it will be clearer.  
Nope, it all remains muddled,  
I'm in trouble.

Trying to escape the playground of torment,  
I ask for answers. My parents should know.  
Mom says I'm exotic; so do the girls.  
Dad says, "Son, you are a unique swirl."

A swirl of agitation  
obsessing over, "What are you?"  
Years come and go—  
answers have yet to be known.

I'm the face of progress, but I feel like  
a victim of cross-culture interest.  
Years long ago this is what they were fighting for—  
offspring stuck in a cultural tug-o-war.

Light enough to be sunburned, but dark enough to  
be called a "nigger;"  
insanity will soon come to pull its trigger.  
My skin reflects the state of mind  
while I decide,

Who am I?

**Sean Golden**

## NOT THE BEST DECISION

We lost it up there. Blinded by the blazing rays of the high noon sun. Two seconds pass and vibrant yellow light is stunning our vision. Five seconds pass and we are now frantically running around the newly manicured lawn. Neighbors stare flabbergasted by the sight of two adults flaying their arms in the air; a chicken with its head cut off could currently function better than us. Desperately in need of a miracle, we keep our eyes peeled on the sky, straining to see past the Sun. Fifteen seconds, it has been fifteen seconds. Our heads begin to droop and the storm of depression cast aside our sunny dispositions. It is a foreign concept to think of smiles gracing our faces ever again. Never will we bask in the glorious glow of innocence. Is it even worth the effort to navigate through a life of brutally bitter hopeless dreams? It has been twenty

seconds. My lips begin to move; ready to muster out a feeble "yes." A mere millisecond after twenty seconds is when I hear it. A faint "wahhhh" is heard from the vastness above. As milliseconds pass, the "WAHHH" becomes sharper and stronger. My head jolts upward scanning the skies when I see at three o'clock the tiny dot barreling down. Screaming, "INNOCENCE IS NOT LOST!" I cast aside all doubts of my athletic ability. With speed, agility, strength, and determination that rival King James', I catapult toward it. Twenty-two seconds since we lost it up there. My arms are extended, but I push them out, further than my reach has gone before. Twenty-two seconds and sixty-five milliseconds, finally I grasp our dearest treasure and brace for impact. Once both feet are safely planted, I'm comforted by the decision to never again play toss with the baby.

**Sean Golden**

## REACHING

Every morning when I leave the house, I reach up and touch a little stick-on paper on the door jamb, a foot or two below the lintel. It is not to energize me to be a champion (Go Teddies!) or a reminder to turn off the lights, turn down the heat or make sure I have my mittens. It is a name. A name of a young woman I have never met: Palmata Musa.

Palmata was one of the young women kidnapped by Boko Haram in Nigeria in April. While some have escaped, the fate of most of them remains unknown. Rumors and reports suggest that the girls were sold, forced to marry, forced to convert to Islam. I touch Palmata Musa's name each morning, not knowing her fate, never having seen her face, hoping, praying, begging God to protect and free her.

The Minneapolis Area Synod, to which our church belongs, has a partner relationship with the Lutheran church in Nigeria. When the young women were kidnapped, our bishop asked each of the congregations in the area to pray for one of them. We received Palmata's name. We pray for her every Sunday in worship, I touch her name every morning when I leave my comfortable house. If I had wings, I would fly to her and lift her back to her family, along with all the others. If I had wisdom to move minds that will not budge, I would whisper in her captive's ear and change his heart. And to be honest, there are some days I wish I had enough firepower and no moral scruples so that I could go and wipe out every one of the men who did this.

I won't do that, and I try to restrain myself from praying that. Violence of that sort would only engender more kidnappings, more bombings, more drones. But many days,



I touch Palmata's name not as an act of hope, but one of desperation.

As a pastor, I preach hope. I try to live a peace beyond understanding, a love that is willing to suffer for the other. They are all put to the test when I think of Palmata. I don't know why God has not acted to free her and so many others afflicted by war, rape, oppression. I don't know if God will ever answer my prayer in the way I want it answered, if Palmata will ever be freed, if we will ever know. But I touch it, fiercely, each morning, as much in defiance as in trust.

Wikipedia notes that "When open, doors admit people, animals, ventilation and/or light." I pray that somehow, some way, touching her name and calling it out will someday open some door. That people will learn to live in peace, that the wolf will indeed lie down with the lamb, that we will all be able to breathe, that light will overcome the darkness. But even when I struggle to believe that, I will not stop reaching to touch her name. I will be faithful in my little way, praying that reaching to touch her name is not an futile act, but an opening, a fire, a wind.

**Patrick Cabello Hansel**

## BLACKBIRD FEATHER

If I were Arapaho,  
I might think less of this feather,  
knowing that the blackbird  
couldn't save a young girl married to a bull.  
Yet it knew enough  
to recommend the badger and the mole  
who used their cunning  
to rescue Splinter Foot Girl  
from the bull and a merciless stone.  
The blackbird played its role,  
which is all any of us can do.

Did you know these things  
when you picked up this feather  
and stuck it in your cap?  
Did you think,  
If night is a blackbird's wing,  
I am holding a piece of night?  
Was it the crystalline perfection  
or just that beauty, once found,  
cannot be given back?

**Bart Galle**

## THE AMERICAN

My father flips through the Parade of Homes catalog, the cover reads: Where dream homes come true. He marvels at a million dollar geothermal heated home.

At sixty-seven, with his most steady source of income a social security check, he still dreams of buying a house with every lottery ticket he purchases, still wants a piece of el sueño americano. He's lived in his share of one-room apartments and shameful trailer homes, and would like to live in a place he'd be proud to call his own.

As a child, I thought he was Elvis with his shiny black pompadour, and at Christmas, Santa Clause, working a fulltime and at least two part-time jobs for the day he would help his youngest adjust his tassel before taking his place among the others in black robes, like crows perched on the edge of the future.

**Marion Gomez**

## WHEN I WAS YOUNG...

*Group Poem of St. Paul's Home  
—Low-Income Housing for Seniors*

When I was young, I loved to...  
Sing and read  
Roll down a grassy hill  
Play piano  
Look at the clouds and stars  
Rake leaves and jump in them  
Watch horror shows and play Monopoly

When I was young, I didn't like...  
To get caught doing things I shouldn't  
Liver  
Gym class  
Go to sleep early  
Get the switch  
Peas

When I was young, I wish I had ...  
Joined drama club  
Listened closer to my grandpa's stories  
Waited to get married  
Learned Spanish  
Asked my dad how to fix things  
Not run away from home

If I were young again, I would...  
Live bolder  
Go back to say hello to the old people who raised me  
Spend more time with my little sister  
Appreciate wisdom more  
Steal home when I had the chance  
Not worry what other people thought of me

**Sue, Chris, Kim, Mary, Tammy, Patrick**

## ANGELS CRY

The rain pours down  
 Silently the skies weep  
 Weep for the Broken  
 For the Hurt  
 For the Heartless  
 For the Sorrowful  
 The Angels who watch over us  
 Cry  
 Cry for us and our inhuman actions  
 What person could willingly kill  
 Kill a Brother with no remorse  
 Kill a Sister and shed no tears  
 Kill a Father and repent none  
 Kill a Mother with a Sick Twisted Smile  
 They Cry  
 &  
 They Weep  
 Weep For us  
 So that we may  
 Wash Our Unforgivable Sins Away  
 So we may start a new  
 But we cannot  
 We will repeat what has happened  
 It will be like that until we all  
 Perish  
 So until then  
 They will cry silently

**Jennifer Martinez-Swalley, 15**  
*2nd Place Youth Poetry Contest, Older Division*

A distant sound being hear in Phillips  
 Everyone together laughing  
 Different people coming around  
 Those with different backgrounds  
 All from different classes  
 Those unique artists  
 Those who love to garden  
 Those who are poor or rich  
 Still sharing the same sound  
 We all may be a bit different,  
 But we all love Phillips  
 And share the same sound

**Maggie Lamoire, 15**

Oigo Phillips cantando, porque el verano ha llegado  
 Oigo Phillips cantando Alegría  
 Oigo Phillips cantando Gloria porque hay mucha vida  
 Oigo Phillips cantando algunas veces de miedo  
 Oigo Phillips cantando y pidiendo por mejores vidas

**Marcela Pérez, 13**  
*Honorable Mention, Youth Poetry Contest, Older Division*

Everyone may seem happy, but we all have our problems. The ones where people try to hide, but many show through. There is always struggle: you never know if you'll have enough money to last your family till the end of the month. In fear of being able to afford a roof over your head. To protect your innocent children from the hardships of life. Those who deal with stress and depression. Teenage mothers. And homeless men. All who struggle to get through life, and get through the day. We all work hard. Fear of failing. Many dropouts and runaways. Phillips is a place for the people, but some may stray. Cultures come together, but many still fight. When can we get along and fight hunger? If Phillips works together, it would all be better. We would be welcoming. Instead of distant. But we are all too different.

**Maggie Lamoire, 15**

## JOHN DOE

Who you really are- no one knows,  
 a ghastly shape surrounded by clothes.  
 No one can seem to figure you out,  
 but their dying to know what you're all about.  
 They want to know how you just simply remain yourself,  
 when everyone they know, wants to be someone else.  
 Your cunning phrases and jokes seem  
 to always faze them,  
 And your stunning abilities seem to amaze them.  
 After a long day, you go home and take care  
 of your daughter,  
 she's seven years old and already a scholar.  
 You fix her a meal and put her to sleep  
 then you leave out the door without a peep.  
 You come back in the morning- bright and shining,  
 your daughter knows you left  
 but no screaming nor whining.  
 She knows everything that everyone  
 does has a purpose,  
 you then realize your effort at parenting  
 wasn't totally worthless.  
 You pat her on her pretty little head,  
 slink up the stairs and fall into bed.  
 What everyone sees is not how it seems,  
 their words cloud your worry filled dreams.  
 There's more to you than everyone knows,  
 why can't I figure you out, Mr. John Doe?

**Destiny Walker, 15**

Water  
 Calm, adventurous  
 Flowing, trickling, pouring  
 Water

**Derek Brown, 15**

## I HEAR PHILLIPS SINGING

I hear Phillips singing before art I'm seeing bad people singing  
I'm seeing poor people singing I'm seeing nice art singing  
I'm seeing nice hands singing I'm seeing people arguing for  
no reason singing I'm seeing first people singing I'm seeing  
little birds picking on other little birds singing I'm seeing nice  
people singing I'm seeing bad and good singing.

**Ariana Johnson, 12**

I hear Phillips singing  
Songs about people singing  
One of the people  
The Phillips community sings about  
Is about the guy that always comes by  
My block in his ice cream truck

**Alejandro Vergara, 14**

I hear Phillips singing.  
The gardeners sing while pulling weeds.  
The construction men sing about their tools.  
The designers sing about their sketches.  
The firemen sing about their fire trucks.  
The cashiers sing about their products  
And then they sing about their cash!

**Fredi Ponce, age 13**

*3rd Place, Youth Poetry Contest, Younger Division*

I hear Phillips singing...  
Nice kind people who will give you help if you need it  
The homeless trying to get money just so they can eat  
Children laughing as they play with not a care in the world  
The children's parents trying to keep track of their kids  
So they don't get in trouble  
The children going home at the end of the day  
The homeless man trying to find a place to sleep  
Everybody sleeping so the day can start over.  
I hear Phillips singing...

**Rosa Lamoire, 13**

*3rd Place Youth Poetry Contest, Older Division*

I hear Phillips signing creativity,  
The homeless people taking the bus,  
People playing soccer in their back yard,  
People buying things at the Mercado Central,  
I hear people shouting and jumping,  
When they watch the World Cup at Midtown Global Market

**Talia Hansel, 14**

*Honorable Mention, Youth Poetry Contest, Older Division*

I hear Phillips singing, the homeless people crying for help,  
the sobbing I hear each and every day. Under the hot sun  
on a corner street, by a light hoping for someone to care. I  
hear babies laughing in the park and their moms screaming,  
asking them to calm down. I hear different languages all over  
the streets, maybe I don't understand it, but it is good to hear.  
I hear fire trucks rushing through the streets going to help  
someone in need.

**Fatima Castro, 18**

## DEAR GOD,

How are you doing up there in heaven and what's gonna  
happen in the future—anything exiting or dull or just terrible—  
cheese pretzel sausage hot dogs bikes community people  
watermelon grapes cheese steak cheesecake protestors  
bananananana—don't know how to spell it—water cups  
internet communication friends family siblings earth children  
dinosaurs laughter smiles plants flowers sun and moon you  
made all of that that's pretty cool and you should be proud  
cause I could definitely not do that!

**Talia Hansel, 14**

When I look in the mirror,  
I fell like my face is melting  
Like butter on the sidewalk.  
When I look in the mirror and see that,  
I try to make myself happy  
By jumping on the bed.  
It makes me feel like an airplane.  
I like airplanes.

**Adora Owens, 14**

*Honorable Mention, Youth Poetry Contest, Older Division*

Eyes were dry when I departed,  
out of all the pain you caused  
I left happily without shedding any  
tears you made me feel pain throughout  
our whole relationship it was crucial  
You broke me into pieces and now I  
have to happily depart without you to find  
myself again. It's not that I don't  
care it took me every ounce of  
courage to leave you HAPPILY!

**Dharel Hart, 14**

## MY FAMILY

Mi familia vino de México: Jolalpan, Puebla  
 Pero viven en Morelos Axochiapan.  
 Mis padres se unieron juntos y trajeron  
 Dos hermanos míos. Y después mis papas  
 Regresaron a México, y mi mamá tuvo  
 Un bebé pero se murió.

Decidieron regresar aquí  
 Y se embarazó mi mamá y tuvo un niño.  
 Y por último se embarazó de mí, pero  
 Mi papá se tuvo que ir a México  
 Porque estaba enfermo de corazón.

**Noemi Arpista, 15**

Mi familia vino de una tierra lejana  
 A place where los Españoles conquistaron  
 They are from a land where houses  
 Are brighter than the sun and give  
 More shade than the trees.  
 Ancestors travelled the ocean,  
 Others walk the dirt to find the cactus  
 Under the eagle that eats snakes  
 I'm not Aztec or Mayan  
 I'm not from Europe or Spain  
 My family is Mexican searching for their dream.

**Fatima Vite, 18**

*1st Place Youth Poetry Contest, Older Division*

Family  
 Happy, wonderful  
 Helping, loving, caring  
 Connected, proud  
 Family

**Derek Brown, 15**

Mi familia vino de México por un buen bienestar  
 Y por tener un buen trabajo y para nosotros  
 Una buena educación. Pero también  
 Para experimentar.  
 Mi papá vino solo y después,  
 Nosotros  
 Con mamá.  
 Desgraciadamente mi mamá no pudo pasar  
 Y se quedó en México  
 Y nosotros con otra familia.  
 Eramos solo dos niños buscando  
 Por el amor de mamá  
 Y mamá buscando a nosotros.  
 Por fin, llegó y los juntamos otra vez.

**Marian García, 15**

My family is dysfunctional.  
 In a good way!  
 Each of us are different and unique.  
 We always bicker and argue  
 But we're still there for each other  
 Through thick and thin.

**Maggie Lamorie, 15**

*Honorable Mention, Youth Poetry Contest,  
 Older Division*

My family is like a wolf pack  
 We look out for one another.  
 If we hunt, we hunt together  
 No one is left behind.  
 If someone disrespected the leader  
 They don't get invited back.  
 We don't look for trouble  
 But we are ready to fight.  
 We work together  
 Nothing can be better.

**Fatima Vite, 18**

# THE HARDEST THING I'VE EVER DONE

Group poem by St. Paul's Young Leaders Program

The hardest thing I've ever done...

... is leaving my family. Leaving the people who were everything for me. People who I grew up with. People who were there for me. When I found out that I had to do it, it was really hard for me. But I found out that it was the best for me, and no matter what, they will always be in my heart.

**Marcela Perez, 13**

... is to lose a friend and have to accept that they're not my friend anymore.

**Talia Hansel, 14**

... is killing rats and trapping them and cleaning up their poop at my aunt's house.

**Fredi Ponce, 13**

... is telling a friend that I was sorry for hurting him.

**Tanner Leehey, 16**

... was control my own dreams. I used to have nightmares of cheeseburgers that tried to eat me, or falling from a skyscraper. So I tried with all of my might, then I finally was in control. I started chasing the burgers, and I could FLY!

**Derek Brown, 15**

... was telling someone how I feel towards them.

**Marian Garcia, 15**

... was to try and build a robot.

**José Becerra, 16**

... was trying to run 100 yards and I only made it to 85.

**Sylence McKinnie**

... taking a math test. Telling people how I really feel. Trying to talk my way out of something.

**Adora Owens, 14**

... was leaving the place where I was born to come to a country that I've never been before. To leave by grandparents behind and having the thought that I would never see them again. Calling my grandma once I was here and trying to hold back the tears, being able to explain to her why I didn't tell her that I needed to leave.

**Fatima Castro, 18**



## PANECILLOS

caramelos, con chispas  
haciendo, comiendo, saboreando  
El panadero hace un servicio  
importante.  
Pastelillos

**por Dulce Daniel Carmona, 8**  
*Honorable Mention, Youth Poetry  
Contest, Younger Division*

## PIZZA

redonda, plana  
abriendo, comiendo, saboreando  
Toca la puerta y cambiamos dine-  
ro para pizza.  
Pan con tomate

**por Jonathan Martinez-Trinidad, 8**  
*Honorable Mention, Youth Poetry  
Contest, Younger Division*

## DINOSAURIO

gigante, dientes filosos  
atacando, corriendo, atrapando  
Los dinosaurios se extinguieron  
hace millones de años.  
T. Rex

**por Angel Sotelo, 8**  
*Honorable Mention, Youth Poetry  
Contest, Younger Division*

## COLORES

brillantes, crayolas  
brillando, coloreando, pintando  
Puedes borrar y colorear.  
Pinturas

**por Nanci Duarte – Ponce, 8**

## DEAR ADAM,

Thank you for being my brother.  
You are the only one I will go  
To when I get bullied.

**Jayada, 11**

## GORILAS

grandes, fuertes  
corriendo, atrapando, comiendo  
Las gorilas están en peligro.  
Monos

**por Andres Mendez Ariza, 8**

## TIRANOSAURIO REX

feroz, grande  
atacando, corriendo, rasguñando  
Los fosiles son la prueba.  
Dinosaurio

**por Eduardo Cervantes – Burgos, 8**  
*Honorable Mention, Youth Poetry  
Contest, Younger Division*

## TRUENOS

espantosos, ruidosos  
estallando, temblando, derrum-  
bando  
La gente corre de los truenos.  
Baboom!

**por Fernando Javana – Parra, 8**  
*Honorable Mention, Youth Poetry  
Contest, Younger Division*

## ZOMBIES

verde, horrible  
saltando, espantando, atacando  
Los zombies vienen del bosque.  
Monstruos, 8

**por Cory Valdivieso – Calle, 8**

## CHEETOS

anaranjados, ricos  
crujiendo, manchando,  
acabando  
Algunos son de queso,  
otros son de chile.  
Takis

**por Helen Perdomo – Morgado, 8**  
*1st Place (Tie), Youth Poetry Con-  
test, Younger Division*

## OIGO PHILLIPS CANTANDO:

Calor  
Ríos  
Cascadas  
Lagos  
Sol  
Nubes  
Pájaros  
¡Y cantando mucho!

**Itzel García, 11**  
*1st Place (Tie), Youth Poetry Con-  
test, Younger Division*

## YO AMO EL AGUA

Y el agua me ama a mi  
Yo quiero el agua  
Y el agua me quiere a mi  
El agua es mi vida  
El agua es mi mejor amiga

(I love the water  
And the water loves me  
I want the water  
And the water wants me  
The water is my life  
The water is my best friend)

**Ana Isabel, 11**  
*Honorable Mention, Youth Poetry  
Contest, Younger Division*

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[www.midtownphillips.org](http://www.midtownphillips.org)

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*The Phoenix of Phillips* is a publication of the Semilla Community Arts Program at St. Paul's Lutheran Church. For the past eight years, Semilla has taught mosaics, mural arts, photography, puppetry and creative writing to over 1900 people and installed murals and artistic place holders throughout the neighborhood of Phillips. Semilla means "seed" in Spanish, and it is our passion to plant seeds of hope, justice and beauty in our community. We do so, conscious of the challenges facing us, but more conscious of the great hope we have.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** on the Phillips Avenue of the Arts, Wednesday Night Free Open Studio, and workshops in photography, creative writing, mosaics and murals:

### IGLESIA LUTERANA SAN PABLO

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## SEMBRARE

(I planted peace, and war arose.  
I sowed love, and hate broke out.  
When we plant hope  
In the hearts of our children  
Do you think doubts will flower?  
I seeded beauty, and harvested weeds.  
I planted joy, and was swallowed by pain.  
But even if I plant a thousand times peace  
And a thousand times love, and a thousand times  
Only evil appears, I will not stop.  
I will plant. I will plant.)

**Patrick Cabello Hansel**

HELP MAKE *THE PHOENIX  
OF PHILLIPS* A FIRE  
OF LITERARY BEAUTY  
BY SUPPORTING THE  
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## YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHY SHOW

The youth photography project of St. Paul's is called "God's Backyard". It seeks to give young photographers the skill to see their neighborhood in new ways and document it in an artistic way. Phillips is often relegated to "backyard status" among the communities of Minneapolis, which keeps people from seeing a vibrant, diverse, beautiful community. The 2014-2015 show "We Are Midtown Phillips" sought to document that vitality.

### YOUTH PHOTOGRAPHERS 2014-2015

Agustin, Anthony, Fatima, Fatima, Noemi, Jose, Derek, Mauricio, Itzel, Marian, Talia, Andre, Ana, Milka, Maggie, Rosa, Ariana, Tanner, Ricardo, Sylence, Adora, Fredi, Alejandro, Yasmine, Marcela, Ave, Cyrus, Azareel, Belem, Marcela, Stephanie, Emiliano, Heidi, Lisseth, Abigail, Jayada, Dhariel, Mohamed, Odalis, Jenny, Julisa, Mireya.

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Dana Nelson, Patrick Cabello Hansel, Sean Goldman.



# PHOENIX OF PHILLIPS