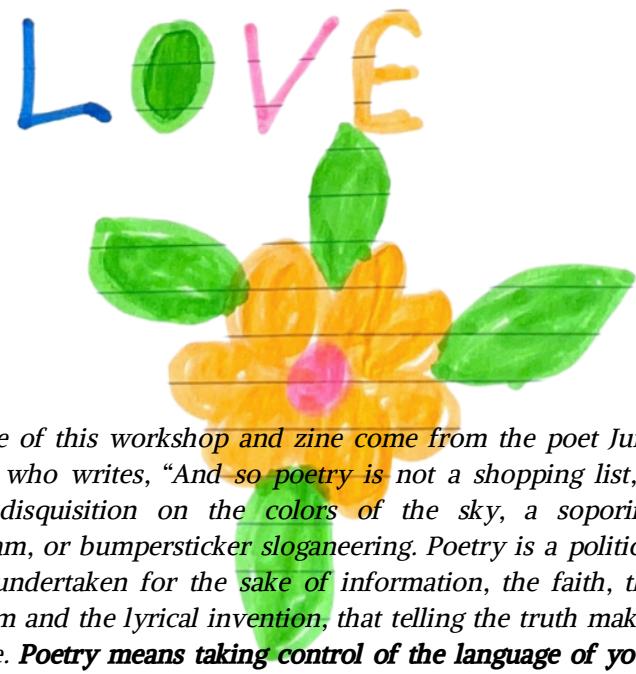


These poems were written collectively in Fall 2024 by Paul, Rosalee, Anne, Tomorrow, Nick, William, EJ, Jorge, Maria, Josh, Ilan, Rachel, Peter, and more.

Our weekly themes were sound, momentum, repetition, renewal, truth, solidarity, love, fear, and forgiveness.

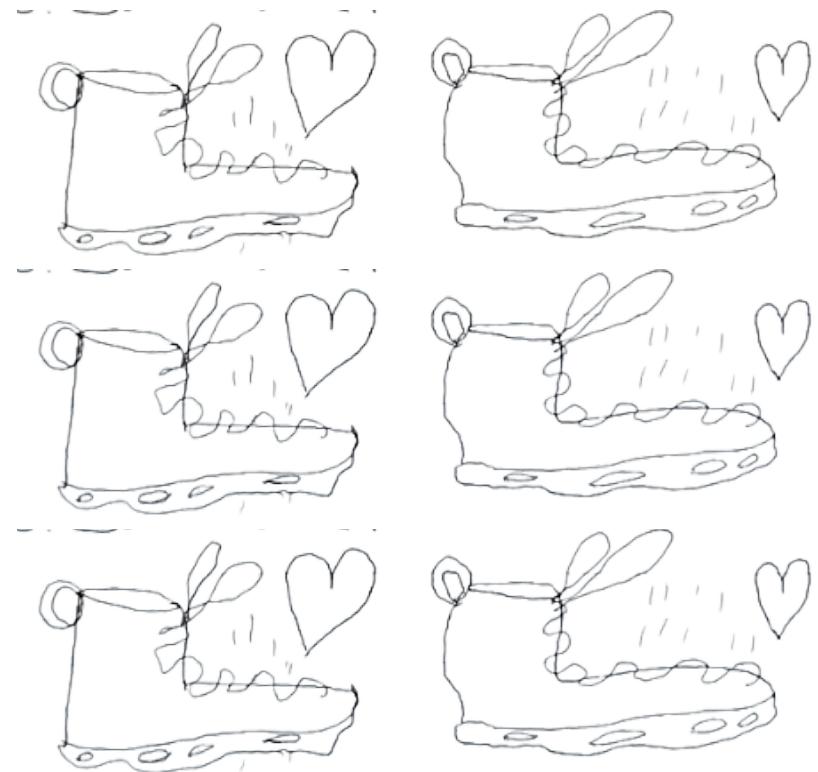
We read work by Audre Lorde, Aracelis Girmay, Ross Gay, Terrance Hayes, Billy-Ray Belcourt, Natalie Diaz, Zaina Alsous, aja monet, Mohammed El-Kurd, bell hooks, Pablo Neruda, Gwendolyn Brooks, and Mary Oliver.



*The title of this workshop and zine come from the poet June Jordan, who writes, “And so poetry is not a shopping list, a casual disquisition on the colors of the sky, a soporific daydream, or bumpersticker sloganizing. Poetry is a political action undertaken for the sake of information, the faith, the exorcism and the lyrical invention, that telling the truth makes possible. **Poetry means taking control of the language of your life.** Good poems can interdict a suicide, rescue a love affair and build a revolution in which speaking and listening to somebody becomes the first and last purpose to every social encounter.”*

sound..momentum..repetition..renewal..truth..solidarity..love..fear..forgiveness

The Language of Your Life



We wrote down; we wrote aloud. We wrote alone; we wrote together. For three months, from 10:30–11:30 on Wednesdays, we were an ebb and flow – we were a writing group.

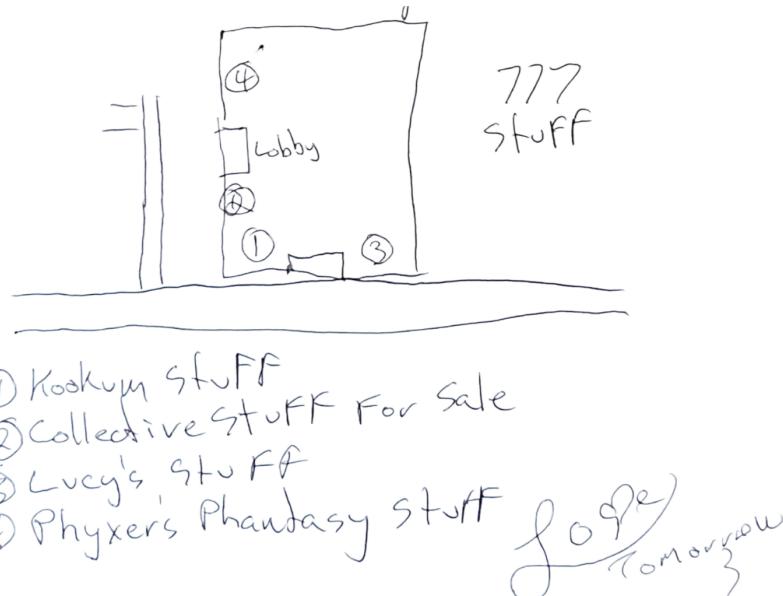
We built the workshop structure together: First, we wrote alone, shared, then compiled lines into a collective poem on a huge sheet of paper. Sometimes, we transformed that poem: by replacing all the *I*'s with *we*'s (9), or every noun for *love* (13). Quickly, our structure became a loop: each week, we began by reading the past week's collective poem aloud.

We tried some other tricks, too: One week, everyone chose a word to repeat in their own work – *goals, stuff, shout, stress, in my living room, together* – which we then used to write our collective poem (10). We wrote some poems aloud, too, going around, person by person, line by line, lemon by lemon (3, 11).

You may notice certain phrases, some *big blue windows*, return. Rachel often copied down our past collective poems and shared them aloud, tossing them back into our new work, reminding us, like any good loop, of our own repetition.

This zine, like our group, was built together. Paul drew the shoes and forgiveness mirror; Tomorrow drew the stuff map. Maria drew the love.

We wrote the poems. Us! We were the loop. Together.



I hope to have a better year
Looking out and seeing
The leaves changing colour
Wanting that for myself,
Changing

–
The window's closed
I don't wanna get sick
I don't know if you can help me
I open the window at daytime
I drink a cup of tea

–
I like both:
The branches blowing in the wind
The warmth of the sun

I FEEL CROWDED
I WANT TO FEEL LOVED

WHAT IS THIS THING
CALLED FEELING?

FEAR COMES
IN ALL TYPES OF WAYS:

LONELINESS, LIZARDS,
SPIDERS, PEOPLE

MOVEMENT MUTED
BY THE UNNAMED MASS

IT SPEAKS TO ME
IN TWISTED KNOTS

AFRAID TO LIVE
AFRAID TO LOVE

WHEN THERE'S NOTHING TO FEAR,
THERE'S NOTHING TO LOVE

SOMETHING TO RESPARK
WHERE YOU WERE BEFORE

SOME FEAR REFLECTION
I DON'T FEAR A FLOOD

A lemon – wait
A lemon tree

The fruit is acid
But sweet at the end

I tend to it carefully
I spare none

I love water
Pressed in the glass

Come here!

Adore me
I am a lemon tree

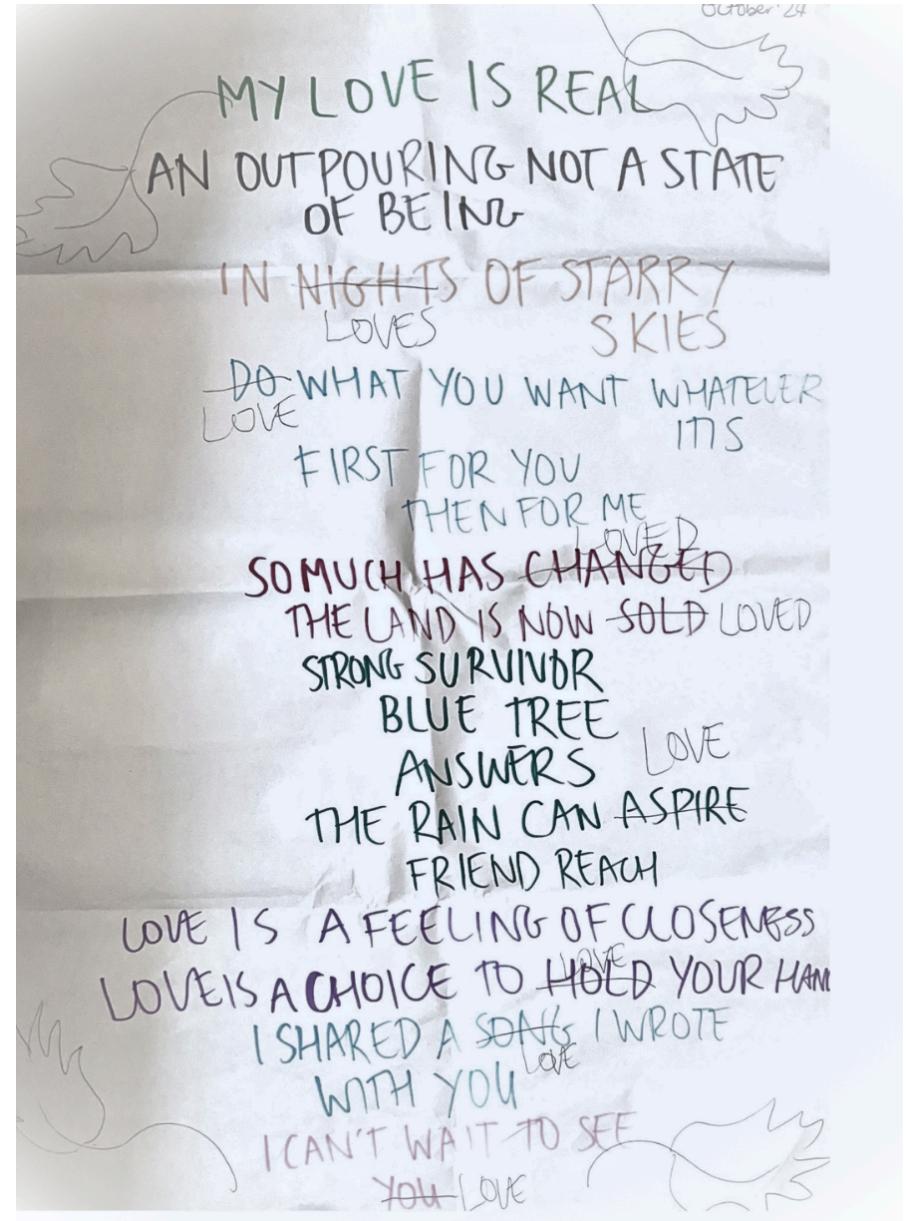
I saw you as a big blue window
Looking at me

A tree without leaves
Trembling
Fragile, sharp, solid

You are in my dreams a lot

We are the bakers of our own window
Every year I plan to have a new window

Light comes in and you can look out
Walking quickly
Here I am



MY LOVE IS REAL
AN OUTPOURING, NOT A STATE OF BEING

IN LOVES OF STARRY SKIES
LOVE WHAT YOU WANT, WHATEVER IT IS

FIRST FOR YOU
THEN FOR ME

SO MUCH HAS LOVED
THE LAND IS NOW LOVED

STRONG SURVIVOR
BLUE TREE ANSWERS

THE RAIN CAN LOVE
FRIENDS LOVE

LOVE IS A FEELING OF CLOSENESS
LOVE IS A CHOICE TO LOVE YOUR HAND

I SHARED A LOVE I WROTE
WITH YOU

I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE
LOVE

I SAW YOU AS A BIG BLUE window
lookin at me
tree without leaves
trembling
fragile, sharp, solid
you are in my dreams at
window
we are the bakers of cake
every year i plan to have new
window
light comes in and you can
look out
walking quickly
here i am

| | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| T TOGETHER! | SHOUT TOGETHER! | SHOUT TO | |
| OUT STRESS-STUFF LIVING ROOM TOGETHER! | GOALS SHOUT STRESS-STUFF IN MY LIVING ROOM TOGETHER! | GOALS SHOUT IN MY LIVI TOGE' | The truth of the washing machine |
| YOU WATCH TV LIVING ROOM! | STRESS YOU WATCH TV IN MY LIVING ROOM! | STRESS YOU IN MY LIVI | Wash it down the drain Funneling down |
| GOALS SHOUT OUT LIVING ROOM! | STRESS-GOALS SHOUT OUT IN MY LIVING ROOM! | STRESS-GOAL IN MY LIVI | Water bubbling big and small |
| OUT STRESS-STUFF TOGETHER! | GOALS SHOUT STRESS-STUFF TOGETHER! | GOALS SHOUT TOGE' | Water dressed, overflowing Dropping in and out |
| ER YOUR FAMILY! HER TOGETHER! | TOGETHER YOUR FAMILY! TOGETHER TOGETHER! | TOGETHER Y TOGETHER | Can I see my own reflection? |
| SHOUT OUT GOALS LIVING ROOM TOGETHER! | SHOUT OUT GOALS IN MY LIVING ROOM TOGETHER! | SHOUT OI IN MY LIVI TOGE' | I swim in the water Drink, water, lemon |
| ARE STRESS STUFF! IS STRESS STUFF! IN MY GARDEN! MY LIVING ROOM! | GOALS ARE STRESS STUFF! FAMILY IS STRESS STUFF! SHOUT IN MY GARDEN! SHOUT IN MY LIVING ROOM! | GOALS ARE S' FAMILY IS ST SHOUT IN M SHOUT IN MY | I hold my breath Drip, drip, drip |
| SHOUT TOGETHER! SHOUT TOGETHER! SHOUT TOGETHER! | SHOUT TOGETHER! SHOUT TOGETHER! SHOUT TOGETHER! | SHOUT TO SHOUT TO SHOUT TO | Anything that starts should resolve |

I hope to think positive
I hope this year gets better

I have to listen
To the moon and what surrounds me

Escape the weight of the mind
Slow walking limp

So happy I got the foot cast off
Be careful of how you walk



I'm gonna have fun and relax
Unzip and allow others in

She couldn't recognize him
Running in the dark

Everything's changed
You don't remember the scary times?

There is no deity above love

TOGETHER!

STRESS-STUFF
IN ROOM
THER!

I WATCH TV
NG ROOM!

I SHOUT OUT
NG ROOM!

STRESS-STUFF
THER!

OUR FAMILY!
TOGETHER!

JT GOALS
ING ROOM
THER!

STRESS STUFF!
RESS STUFF!
MY GARDEN!
LIVING ROOM!

TOGETHER!
TOGETHER!
TOGETHER!

SHOUT TOGETHER!

GOALS SHOUT STRESS-STUFF
IN MY LIVING ROOM
TOGETHER!

STRESS YOU WATCH TV
IN MY LIVING ROOM!

STRESS-GOALS SHOUT OUT
IN MY LIVING ROOM!

GOALS SHOUT STRESS-STUFF
TOGETHER!

TOGETHER YOUR FAMILY!
TOGETHER TOGETHER!

SHOUT OUT GOALS
IN MY LIVING ROOM
TOGETHER!

GOALS ARE STRESS STUFF!
FAMILY IS STRESS STUFF!
SHOUT IN MY GARDEN!
SHOUT IN MY LIVING ROOM!

SHOUT TOGETHER!
SHOUT TOGETHER!
SHOUT TOGETHER!

SHOUT TOGE

GOALS SHOUT STR
IN MY LIVING
TOGETHE

STRESS YOU WA
IN MY LIVING R

STRESS-GOALS SH
IN MY LIVING R

GOALS SHOUT STR
TOGETHE

TOGETHER YOUN
TOGETHER TOG

SHOUT OUT G
IN MY LIVING
TOGETHE

GOALS ARE STRE
FAMILY IS STRES
SHOUT IN MY G
SHOUT IN MY LIV

SHOUT TOGE
SHOUT TOGE
SHOUT TOGE

I am a very strong person
I am a survivor

A big blue window
A tree without leaves

You have all the answers
To everything

The rain is something
We cannot live without

Spires aspire
Their sand hurts my knees

I've never met you
but God has blessed you

with a hope that someday
I will find solidarity:

You will be my friend
That can reach the skies

If we can speak,
Which we can,
What would we say?

A light bright inside me
Love and hurt at the same time
Or different times

We drink the soup of bone
We run / A cheap rug
We run / A big blue window looking at me

Hard to swallow in the shadows
No existe el tiempo, el futuro
Might as well tie all that in

A tree without leaves
A shaft of light with darkness

Light comes in
You can look out