UNHEARD VOICES…

A Teen Literary and Art Zine from the Kansas City Public Library.
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Cover art by Elena
MEET THE EDITORS

Hey everyone my name is Esther. I'm from Atlanta and I moved here about a year ago. I love to coming to the Central Library downtown Kansas City, Missouri because the librarians are awesome. When I heard about the Teen Zine I wanted to be part of it because I wanted to get teens published. To give them a chance to speak their minds and say things they wouldn't ever say to anyone and get a positive reaction. I love to sing and perform so i know how important it is to be heard and for people to recognize where you are coming from and what you are trying to do.

My name is Emma Medill. I am a fourteen year old girl who goes to Northtown high school. I enjoy reading, video games, singing, and the interwebs. I also love dying my hair. My favorite video games are Obscure, Pokemon, Lollipop Chainsaw, and Mortal Kombat. I have two cats named Roxie and Lola, they are like my children. This zine is a great way for unknown teens to get their work published and I am very happy to be a part of it. This great opportunity that not very many teens get, it’s great that we have something like this in Kansas City. I love Central library and I’m happy that they care about the teens and give us the chance to leave an imprint on Kansas City.

Hey my name is Christian. I’m 16 and I live in Kansas City. I love music and I draw, paint and dance. I love getting out and doing things with other teens. It’s a good way to get connected with other people. I skateboard and sing lets just say I get around a lot. So I got with this group called “Unheard Voices.” I started coming every Sunday at 2:00pm and from that point I kind of liked it and made a lot of friends. So the master of this plan Wick put this together to get us teens out on a Sunday morning and yes we played around but we got some work done. But hey it’s pretty awesome. I love it here, wish could stay longer but this place closes at 5:00pm guess that’s it man I’m out. This is Christian Simpson and this is my bio.

My name is A.E.Yashiwa and I am writing this bio for the teenz. Well, where do I start? I have a little sister named Nealie, she is 10. I was born in Kansas City, Kansas. When I was about one and a half I moved in to my great aunt’s house where I lived until my mum and my dad split. Then I moved around a lot with my mum and my sister. Then my mum went to jail for 3 years and for that time me and my sister lived with my grandfather. My mum got out I continued to live with my gran for about a year then I moved back in with mum and stepdad and that is where I currently reside. Well that is the story of my life, and the reason I joined the zine: I thought that it was a great way to voice opinions and how people think... and just thought to add I love Starcraft and Doctor Who, that is all.
We wanted to be part of the Teen Zine because it sounded like it was going to be so much fun. Having never been part of any big decision making it felt like this was not only our chance but a chance for teens everywhere to get to tell Kansas city their story and what they have gone through.

Teens don't get a lot of say in this world. We talk but we feel like no one is listening. Getting to work on the Teen Zine made the Unheard teens’ Voices heard. A chance for all teens in the Kansas City, Missouri area to speak up and this time to actually be heard. Wick put all this together to give teens a voice. He felt like everything that was in the news about teens was always negative. He gave us a chance to put together the Teen Zine to show everyone how creative, smart, and amazing Kansas City teens are, and an insight on what goes through our minds.

In a big city it becomes harder and harder to get discovered or even published at all and this gives a great opportunity for some people who will never get that chance to be discovered and published in something people are going to see and enjoy. Central library gives something that most places don't: a chance for things to be different and to give teens a voice so they can tell their own words and their own opinions.

It's a great feeling to know that this group is the first in a revolutionary project to help other teens. Knowing that we are one of the first teen only groups doing a zine all by ourselves, it really gives such a great sense of accomplishment and a sense of doing something bigger than ourselves. It's really quite the amazing feeling to have being only a teenager.

We as a group are also very thankful to all the people that have submitted things for the zine because without your work there would be nothing for us to edit and to give to the public. Putting this together has been months of effort and hard work and beyond totally worth it, making a difference in even one person’s life is worth all the effort in the world. So we hope that this has made a difference in somebody’s life, and that everybody who reads this will take some amount of enjoyment from it.
Title: Lost And Found

Maria has just graduated from high school and has a ticket to Texas, but when she gets there, she gets into an accident. After waking up she finds she can't remember anything! While trying to remember, she meets Martin who claims to be her boyfriend. Together they will both discover her memory and the deep dark secret?

Title: Unspoken

Title: Seductive Stranger

Catherine is a new student. A good one too. So when she tries stopping Jasper so he won't get in trouble, she doesn't expect them both to get in trouble. They both have to try out for the play as punishment. If they don't they will get detention. Catherine decides to go for one of the smaller parts and so does Jasper. Instead of everything falling into plan, Catherine and Jasper are forced to be the lead roles, Cara and Jared, of the romance play. To make things even worse his ex-girlfriend, Allison, is claiming to be pregnant with his baby. Will Jasper and Catherine end up together? Will Jasper listen to his brother? Is Jasper the father?

Jacharity has never believed in predictions like horoscopes and fortune cookies. That is until Jacharity has to listen to her horoscope read out loud by her best friend, Marea. Jacharity doubts it when it says 'You will help a stranger that'll protect you from everything except falling in love.' That's until she actually meets the stranger with her very-two eyes. Now Jacharity sets out to prove her horoscope wrong, although the stranger is very seductive.

To read more get an account on Wattpad.com and goto Wattpad.com/user/JacharityHollow
The Musician
By: Elena

When you entered her house
the air felt constrictive,
you would feel caged and watched.

A piano sat there,
it's place was set apart
from the rest of the house.
Every day for five hours
Bach's sonatas would sound.

The musician's eyes shut
and she would sway, leaning
into the sounds that she
had poured so much passion.

Next was the violin.
She would play concertos,
perform waltzes until
she was interrupted.

Called down from her haven
and made to live awake.
By: Elena

I stood in front of the mirror, giving my reflection a long satisfied look. I looked good. I had my uniform on, my brand new military uniform. I wasn’t very tall, and I wasn’t very muscular, but that uniform made me feel taller than Jack Smith from high school and more muscular than Johnny Davis from the football team I never made. I gave my reflection a sharp nod and fought to keep the grin off my face. Look at me now Jack Smith; just look at me now Johnny Davis. Those two guys had been the leading hell since kindergarten. In the end they drove me right out of high school, I never even graduated. But what does a diploma mean to anyone these days anyway?

It meant a lot to my mom. Before I’d even hit senior year, she’d gone out and spent her savings on a shiny new frame for the diploma she was sure I’d get. Ironically, she came home with that surprise frame the same day I dropped out. It’s a nice frame at least. I told her to just go ahead and put something else in it. I told her that her wedding picture would look just swell in it. But she said the only thing going in that frame was a high school diploma, and that she’d better not die with an empty frame.

I walked over to the empty frame hanging on the wall. I saw myself in the shiny glass. I turned away; I looked better in the mirror. Sighing, I adjusted the sleeves on my uniform and fiddled with the buttons as I walked back to the mirror. Ever since my mother had come home with that frame, I’d been waiting for this day to come. Well here it was, and it was nothing like I’d imagined. My mom should’ve been next to me the first time I put on that uniform. I’d imagined for a long time how that day would’ve been.

I’d be standing in front of the mirror, like now. She would be smoothing out the wrinkles and buttoning the buttons for me while she gushed about how handsome I looked. And I would shake my head and smile at her.

“Mom, I’m going to war, not prom.” I’d laugh. And she’d hit me on the arm and give me a stern look.

“Well you would’ve been going to prom if you’d stuck around high school a bit longer.” she’d scold me, but I would know that she wasn’t really mad at me this time.

“Mom, how would I ever have gotten a girl to go with me anyway?” I’d say.

“Oh Henry, any girl would be crazy not to go with you.” she’d say and I’d roll my eyes, typical mothers.

Then we’d both get serious and she might even tear up a bit, “Henry, I’m so proud of you.” she’d whisper, “So very proud.” then she’d snap at me of a sudden, “So don’t you go getting yourself killed. I want you home for Thanksgiving in one piece, you hear?”

“Don’t worry ‘bout me mom,” I’d say, “I’ll be home for Thanksgiving, don’t worry ‘bout a thing.” Then she’d give me a great big hug and start crying her eyes out on my shoulder. I’d rub her back and comfort her. I wouldn’t cry. After she’d finished crying, I’d say goodbye one last time before heading off to the train station to get myself a heroes certificate to put in that empty frame.

It’s a nice dream, right? It was one that wasn’t ever going to happen because she died last summer, from some fever or other, I can’t remember which it was. There’s a bunch, aren’t there? So anyway, I stood in front of the mirror alone, smoothing the wrinkles out myself; doing the buttons myself.

It was loud. There were cansons and guns, yelling and shouting, grenades and bombs. I’d finally made it to war, I’d finally gotten my shot to play hero, to make my mom proud. Except, I wasn’t out there on the battlefield, with all of those brave men, shooting and shouting, yelling and dying. No, I was sitting in the fox hold, terrified out of my mind. I’d almost gotten out there, I had been shaking terribly, but still, I’d almost made it. But then, two soldiers were hurried past me in stretchers. Johnny Davis and Jack Smith. They were a mess, drenched in blood, moaning in agony. I think that sight scared me more than anything ever had, in my entire life. If Johnny Davis and Jack Smith couldn’t make it in war, how could I? Look at me now Jack Smith; look at me now Johnny Davis, you scare me more in a stretcher than you ever did standing up.

As night fell, the battle ended. I finally crawled out of the fox hold. I looked at the battlefield where a hundred Johnnys and Jacks lay dead. It was the cake of war. Blood smeared across the surface like frosting and soldiers strewn randomly on top like sprinkles. It was disgusting. I fought to keep my lunch in. It came out anyway.

Whatever made me decide to go to war? Who did I think I was? I wasn’t a Johnny or a Jack. I was a Henry, hopeless high school drop-out, Henry. And now I had tears running down my face because I wasn’t strong enough to keep them in.

“What are you crying at boy?” the harsh voice spun me around. I looked up to see Sergeant Brown, he was some odd years older than me and his face was so tight it must actually hurt him to smile.

“Well I—I’m sorry s-sir, I just—I can’t handle all of this and—” I sniffled as I tried to stop crying.

“Then what the hell did you think you were doing, coming to war?!” the Sergeant barked, “To make your mama proud?” he added sarcastically, not knowing that he’d hit home.

“Well, yeah.” I shrugged, “But she didn’t even get to see me in my uniform.” The Sergeant’s eyes flashed and he took a terrifying step closer to me.

“You listen here.” he growled, “War isn’t for making mama’s proud and uniforms aren’t for playing dress up in. War is about fighting for your country.”
“I know that sir.” I sniffled; I felt like such an idiot, “I just—I just don’t think I’m meant for war. All the blood and—”

“You baby.” the Sergeant spat in disgust. I didn’t have anything to say to that and he marched away, sneering. I turned and went back into my tent, feeling stupid and pathetic. I sat down on my bunk, crying like the baby I was. Jerry walked in then, blotches of blood on him, but he wasn’t too bad. He was always nice to me; he was my age, from Arkansas I think he said.

“What’s wrong Henry?” he asked me, taking his boots off.

“I’m such a baby Jerry.” I sighed pitifully, wiping away the last few tears, “You know, I’ve never even said a curse word before.”

“You don’t say.” Jerry lit up a cigarette. He looked at me after taking a drag from it, “Well,” he said, “you can try now if you want.” I shrugged and he shrugged. He pointed his cigarette at me, “Repeat after me: damn.”


“Well,” he said after a moment, “cursing doesn’t make you a man anyway. It just means you can’t come up with any clever interjections.”

“Well I wish I knew what an interjection was.” I mumbled, “I really don’t belong here. All I wanted was to make my mom proud.”

“You could be a pilot?” Jerry shrugged, “That way you don’t have to be down here with all the blood. You can be up in the sky like a hero.” the word hero was all I needed to hear. A pilot! I was going to be a pilot!

I stared out the window, watching everything zoom by. I was going faster than everybody else; faster than Johnny and Jack and even the Sergeant. I was faster than all of them because I was on the train home. I sighed as the train rolled through the country. The Sergeant had told me to go home after he’d found me hiding behind a tree during battle, so I did. I didn’t even argue. It had been a nice journey, going to war, an adventure I suppose. When I got home, the first thing I saw was that empty frame on the wall shouting loser at me. It was loud. I heard its voice bouncing around in my head, like some sort of deranged howling. My hands fist around my ears before I jerked towards the frame, ripping it off the wall. I didn’t hesitate before smashing it onto the ground. The glass shattered all around me and spun across the polished floorboards. I couldn’t ever feeling so completely out of control.

“God damn it!” I yelled, obviously too lazy to think up clever interjections. After so many failures, it was no surprise I was breaking. I went to the mirror and looked at myself. I wasn’t wearing my uniform anymore, my reflection just didn’t look right. I looked down at the glass at my feet. The glass shards split my reflection into a million different pieces. It was the most accurate reflection I’d ever seen of myself.
Violence

The Dragon of the Night

Thou must slay the Dragon,
The Dragon of the Night.
For his claws are butcher's knives,
And his jaws fearlessly bite.

I shall slay this Dragon,
This Dragon of the Night.
For his claws and jaws are no match for me,
Sayeth the poor young sprite.

So the sprite took a sword of shining gold,
And armour of silver true.
Then slayed the Dragon, and with its wings,
Back to home he flew.

His father cried tears of delight,
For in his heart he knew,
His young sprite wasn’t quite so young,
And was a hero too.

Adrian Bernal

Violence

Violence needs to stop,
Before someone gets shot.
Shooting and killing is not a sport,
The only place you’ll end up is court.
Shooting is not fun,
So, before you pick up that gun,
Stop and think about the consequences of your actions............
Will you be living for today, and not tomorrow’s satisfactions?

What if some gets hurt?
What if the blood’s on my shirt?
What if the cops think I did it?
Will I ever forget it/
What if there’s a witness?
What if I’m overwhelmed with guiltiness?

What if my life is ruined?
Over all this madness in Mayhem,
Was it really worth it?
Or was it because I thought I was too perfect?

By: Kaliyah Burton
The most infamous fear

A The most infamous fear among teenagers today
A It's growing up and the prices to pay
B Thoughts that these teenagers won't tolerate
B It's time to grow up, so don't be late

C Although many claim that they could
C A small percent of them actually would
D The key is happiness and success
D Do what you want, not anything less

E Don't take it too fast, it isn't a race
E Live your life with joy, running at your own pace
F This fear will tear at your mind
F A way to defend is what you must find

G Growing up scares me because it's coming too fast
G I just want to make my childhood last
H I'm not prepared for decisions and paying bills
H I want to be a kid forever and roll down the hills
Questions

As a child I always questioned many things
Thoughts would arise and I wanted the truth

Was God real and how Saturn got its rings?
Or was there a kingdom for the fairy that had my tooth?

Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny always would come
But disappear like the sun in the night

Maybe believing in these things would make me dumb
Wondering if the things I've been told are right.

In one thousand years I may get an answer
For these questions I ponder day by day.

Are there cures for AIDS or cancer?
Knowing the truth is a price I will have to pay.

Over the years, I've learned no one is exact
The truth is hiding to save us all.

No way to determine what is fiction or fact
When you have an answer, please give me a call.
With Arla beside me, Saya and Lumis led the way back to the elven village. There was little chitchat on the way there. Arla had to hold my hand so that I wouldn’t fall behind and get lost. The two elves moved faster than I thought they could, which surprised me. By the time we reached the halfway point, I was out of breath.

“Can’t you guys slow down?” I sat down on the ground, taking a few sips of water. Miki had woken up and was now sitting comfortably upon my head. Saya blinked. “Slow down? We’re walking how we usually do.”

“Walking? You may seem like you’re walking, but to me it’s like you’re running!” I knew I shouldn’t have been complaining, but I was irritated. I had bug bites that itched all over my arms and on my legs, and I could feel a rash on my back. My feet were sore and they ached. Arla looked at me with a harsh look in her eyes.

“You must stop your complaining!” She hissed angrily at me. I had never seen her this angry before.
“You’re like a baby! Always crying if you do not get your way! If you keep it up, I will leave you here, Azalea!”

“Ooooh, some one is in trouble~!” Miki giggled. As soon as she did though, Arla glared at her.

“I’ll leave you here too, Miki!” I could tell from the look in her eyes that she was serious about leaving us both there.

Within a few minutes of resting, we were moving again. The elves were moving a bit slower now, it still seemed a bit too fast for me, but I kept my mouth shut, wary of Arla’s threat. As we continued to venture farther into Deshian, I continued to get more bug bites and soon my arms and legs were scratched up from thorns on plants scratching at my arms.

Saya and Lumis stopped so suddenly in front of me that I almost ran into them. Saya held her arm out in front of me to stop me from continuing on. Lumis was holding back Arla. I looked over to see Arla growling loudly, her teeth sharp and pointed. I froze with fear. If Arla was acting like that and Saya stopped me from walking forward, something bad must be up ahead. Lumis looked at me, holding a finger to his lips.

“We must be very quiet..” Saya whispered to where only I could hear. “There is dark magic ahead when there should not be.. There may be a dark mage up
ahead.”
I nodded. Arla came back over to me, once again holding my hand. Her grip was tight and quickly cut off the blood circulation throughout my hand. Saya and Lumis began walking as slow as possible in the other direction. As we walked, I heard rustling in the trees ahead. I stopped to see what it was.
Crouched down, shrouded in darkness must have been the dark mage. The mage was crouched before something. As I looked closer, I saw the mage was crouched before a unicorn and my eyes widened. Dark moon silver blood dripped from the unicorn’s neck. The unicorn, though bleeding badly, was still alive. It whinnied sadly, looking at me. Its silver-blue eyes locked with my eyes. I froze. The mage had stopped drinking the blood of the unicorn and had turned to look at me. Under its hood of darkness, I saw sharp, black teeth and yellow eyes with black irises. Its mouth curved into an ugly smile.
“You idiot!” Arla yelled, pulling my hand to urge me to move. “The mage will kill you! It has already killed a unicorn, we could be next! Let’s go!!” Her screaming shook me out of my paralysis. The mage had begun moving towards us. I could see it was a male mage and the unicorn’s blood was dripping from the corners of his mouth. He held out his hand to me. I saw his hand was shriveled and bony, his...
I'm not the type of person you can't trust. I'm always playing tricks, gossiping and spreading rumors. What I am about to tell you was enough to change my actions. And indeed it did.

My friend Zac and I decided to play a joke on our neighbor, Dean. He's a good friend and we always entered his house without knocking. The door was open and his parents weren't home. It made us nervous that Dean would leave the door open while home alone. We headed upstairs to his room. Behind the closed door we could hear him typing on his computer. We slowly opened the door and snuck up behind him. Zac went on one side while I went on the other. On the count of three we screamed in his ear and he fell off his chair. I happened to look at his computer screen. He was on Facebook posting false ghost stories about him meeting a bloody Mary. After he got up he said I would improvise and make the stories even better.

I wrote venomous nonsense about Dean going into the bathroom at Applebees and finding a dead body. As soon as I posted it I received a message on my phone. It was from a number I didn't recognize. It said, "You shouldn't tell what isn't true," I was kind of freaked out. I told the scared-out-of-his-mind-Dean and the Laugh-Out-Loud-Zac. They said I was imagining things. I checked my phone. The screen was black and my phone was dead.

A few days later I joined my mom and grandma for a trip to Las Vegas for our vacation. It was a five hour drive from where we lived. I sat in the back seat fiddling with my phone. My mom decided it was time to take a bathroom break and get some food. We were across the street from McDonald's. I begged my mom to let me stay in the car. I'm awfully lazy and she could bring me some food. She declined. I put on my flip flops and got out. I decided I would go to the men's bathroom. I was wrapping up my business when I heard someone in the stall next to me. That was weird. When I came in I was sure no one was there. I came out and being a freaky kid I looked under the stall. I screamed. A man was lying on the floor staring at me from under the door. His mouth was open and filled with black liquid. I jumped back. As I turned around I found myself staring in the mirror. In the reflection was a man crawling from under the stall. I blinked and held my eyes closed for a while hoping it would end. When I opened my eyes the man was an inch away from my face. His empty eye sockets screamed out black liquid and his mouth was stitched up. His hands were choppy and scarred. He appeared to me like a shadow. He closed his two hands on my face and opened his mouth. He released a tongue that stretched around what seemed forever. Before I blacked out I realised he looked like the dead body from my Applebees post on Facebook.

I woke up in the hotel room. The first thing I did was look for my computer. I logged into my account and went on Dean's page. I saw that a man named Roger Simons liked his status. Roger Simon's profile picture looked somewhat familiar. I zoomed in to find myself staring into the deceiving, lying eyes of the McDonald's monster. I got a text again from that same number I hadn't recognised before. It said "look at the news". I turned on the television and flipped the channel to 7. A news reporter said that a man was killed in a McDonald's bathroom. When the investigators searched for evidence they found out that the man's name was Roger, Roger Simons.
(Far away in Egypt... Somewhere.)

Huff, huff, puff!!

Sir, we've been walking for days, and days, and...

![Exclamation mark]

??

Ah, it's that... the...

Oh... my... tace.

Yes, that's the... ONE!

Sir, watch out for that trap!

Come on, let's go!

Uh oh.

Sir, watch out for that trap!

Ah, it's that... the...

Oh... my... taco.

Yes, that's the... ONE!

Sir, watch out for that trap!

Uh oh.

YIKES!

Ahhhhhh?...
Run, Run, Run!

I'ROOM

ha! There it is!

Five Minutes Later

So, you want me to put you in that coffin?!

Yes! And wrap me up quickly!!

Yes, Sir...

Alright, we're almost there.
What... the...

Ahhhh

Am I going to...

Die!?

Ahhhh!

Explode!
Sometimes it’s not enough
to just love you.
As if loving you
was not already
difficult enough.

You sit uncomfortably and slouched over the breakfast table, staring at something in the
distance, or pass it: Pass the trees that surround our small cabin, something that only you
can see. I clear my throat and pour myself a cup of coffee. It was disgusting. I could never
make coffee, despite having worked at a cafe before. Instead, I reach for yours. You don’t
break your gaze, nor do you even acknowledge your mug slipping away from your loose grip. I
clear my throat again, as if the tension between us was building itself in my throat.
“I…” I begin.
“Don’t start.” You mumble, voice still raspy from sleep.
I nod awkwardly and get up. Leaving the cup and the tension lingering behind me as I make my
way back to the bedroom. I plop down on the bed, face first, allowing it to attack the
ruffled pillow. You step in ever so quietly. But my senses were heightened, expectant.
Waiting for something, anything, to occur. This time, you clear your throat. “I’m leaving.”
You say it as if you too, are unsure of the meaning behind it. I lay motionless for a
moment, as if you wouldn’t be able to see me if I stayed frozen, hoping to snag a little
more time to assess the situation, and the ambiguous statement. But I’m not invisible, and
you’ve never been very patient. “Okay.” I say.

And some things will never change. – Tracy Nguyen

Everlasting Love

A ring is round, and have no end,
That’s why our love continues to mend.
You have proved to me not all dudes are the same,
By not playing those deceiving mind games.

My heart has been broken many times before,
But you’ve promised to love me forever more.

I have given you the key to my heart,
And in return I received a brand new start.
You have not only promised to be my lover and friend,
But to never let my heart be broken again.

By: Kaliyah Burtin
Bones

He treks back to where they all used to go.
His back cracks and knees shake as he hurries.
The willow tree still stands, he sits below.
It’s been years since facing the memories.

The simple old days rush back on a train
in his mind. Soft winds rustle the pages
of open books in the grass. And it rains
dandelion dreams, bursting from cages.

With old weathered hands, he digs up the bones.
The skulls of the family he used to know.
He lays out the bones, and the blue wind moans;
his wife next to children from long ago.

Chapped lips brush each skull, tears sparkle on bone.
He wishes for death’s soporific tone.

-Elena
Perfume

Off they went to join the ball
Their floating gowns whispered down the hall
Dripping with diamonds and shining with pearls
leaving behind a less glamorous girl

They'd taken great care to prepare for the night,
painting and powdering every inch in sight
Margi had watched, starved at a feast;
she'd wanted to try on a ball gown at least

After curling the lashes and painting the lips
a slab of perfume was added to each wrist
The girls smelled like lilacs, romance and Rome
they needed only the perfume and the perfume alone

The girls left for the ball, leaving Margi behind
in her tattered old maids' dress, unrefined and resigned
Margi stood up then, to tidy the room
Her hands clutching tight to the old dusty broom

The next task at hand, was to clear up the vanity
on which the bottle of perfume sat, nearly empty
Never had Margi been so tempted before
Her mind was lost somewhere near sanity's shore

The tides crashed down then, for the beach Margi swam
And she buried her face in the soft, fine sand
The sand smelled like lilacs, romance and Rome
And Margi was beautiful, she was perfection's clone

A bubbly champagne ocean washed over perfume-scented sand
While a chandelier sun shined over the
The silk on her skin was pure water
from a sea
And the wind saved a tune on the
breeze quietly...

But with a small click, closed the
bottle of perfume
And Margi was back, dancing a waltz
with a broom

By: Elena

By: Muhammed Abdul-- Ghaffar
The following art and writing is from teenagers who are currently in juvenile corrections facilities. We felt that it was important that their voices are heard. They are often underestimated and overlooked but they have powerful stories to tell. We hope that by publishing these works we can amplify their voices and give them a chance to really be heard.
Deshaun is my family and my son. They're always there for me and his mother. Her and the best parents ever. Going to be here yet. He's still my world. And my most special place would be a nice place where we are eating every time, and we're all having a good time and not fighting.
If I could Change Anything

If I could go back on change anything, it would be my life on the streets. I started running and smoking weed when I was 8 years old. And it got worse. I started smoking meth when I was 11. My Dads been in and out of prison my whole life. My mom was on drugs. It wasn't the life any one should have. I've been at the Coupe Grande for about 9 years now. Selling drugs, shooting drugs, robbing, stealing, playing with crime. I've done every thing but kill someone. This life is a joke. Your best friends are the ones that bite you in the end. It's all a joke. It's a big circle for real. I've been locked up the last 3 years and probably got one or two more two. Now my Dads has done 3 maybe more. And is probably got 5 to go. Life inside isn't fun. I've got a crowd. Family my name been clean for about 8 years now. She turned her life over to God like I've done. Since I've been in here, I plan to finish my GED and go to college. When I get out and get my life on track.
ISLAND

I would be on this island for about 1 week. And it would be with my Big Sister. And the three things I would have a bunch of weed. And food & water. And last a lighter.

In fifteen years hopefully Ima done went to school to be a barber. And finished with the school. After I complete all that I want to own my own barber shop. I'm move my family to California on the beach. Once I accomplish all that I want a studio for R&B music. That what I'd like.
The most important thing in my life it would have to be family because you only get one and when it's gone you can't replace them.

The most peaceful place I could go to clear my mind would have to be the graveyard going to see my parents and just get away from everything around me.

[Sketch of a butterfly]
What I would change if I could, are these paths I've chosen. These roads I've went down too fast down, never really slowed down to see the beauty of life or take time to think about my decisions.
What would I change is the empty feeling in my heart.
Problems that I felt that wasn't good from the start.
Mama grown cold and blew heavy with the wind.
Grandma always love me, at age 10 she took me in.
Pops got his name for the shit that he did, pop out the picture and try to jump back in.
But pops left again, so this time he's locked out, don't call my phone or even come to my house.
Now I'm 17 and I still don't know why I'm lost child with parents that wants to go.
So what I would change is the deep feeling in my heart, is my mom and pops havin sex from the start...
Life in the Hood

In my hood I wish I was a square hustle
No friends just me and my 38 jeans
All dirty wit a pocket full of stories
And the kid can't go home until it's all gone. I'mma younger but my choices are wrong. But I'm All I know Determined to bubble-fight all the younger siblings but no more struggle. Now the family's in pain. In my cell I feel like I'm going insane but things won't change. It's a must that we get paid, but I feel very much played. Benz wet
I'm at the point in my life when I have to make a little change or slip and fall backward and see another path of pain I've seen too much sunlight to step right back into the rain so I have to maintain or at least keep it in the perhaps so I need to see a little change and it starts right here with me so I have to rephrase the negative ways that I think to help me later down the lane so my brain doesn't start to sink in all about that action not that often do I think I go without a blink so I need to slow down and see what they're showing me so I can have it all down see I'm standing tall now no grass and just all clouds doing it for my city trina make ralph proud and my section I know you'll with me and it ain't no doubt now know you thinking that your crispy but you better bow down I'm out now made change for the better not the worst doing it for the guys not on the sweaters but the shirts!!!
FROM THE FACILITATOR

I have to say that I am both excited and saddened that the First Issue of Unheard Voices is going to print. We started this with a simple idea. We wanted to have a chance for our local teens to be able to publish their works following a successful writing program. The Zine evolved into much more than that, though.

When the group of teen editors was coming up with a name for the Zine, they brainstormed about fifty different possibilities. The one they ended up picking was Unheard Voices. I felt like this was a very telling moment in the evolution of what this Zine was to become. Teens often feel like their voices are unheard. It is our hope with this publication that we are able to give them a voice and to help them realize the power that their voices, art, and stories hold.

Issues affecting teens make the news in Kansas City on a daily basis. Whether it is curfews, school districts, health, or crime; there is no shortage of opinions about what we should do. The voices conspicuously absent from many of these discussions is that of the teens themselves. We hope that by raising the voices of the youth in this area that we can more effectively handle the problems facing our city.

In this Zine there is some moving poetry, artwork, and writing. What you have seen is the result of hours of work over a span of months. It was important for us in this project that the teens acted as the editors of the publication. While I acted as a mentor and facilitator, the teens were the real decision makers. They made the calls on the layout and content. We allowed submissions both electronically and physically which lead to some interesting juxtaposition of computer and hard copy design that we hope you enjoy.

We have some amazing young people doing some incredible things in this city. Thank you to everyone who is working to lift up the voices of these young people. You are making this city and this world a better place for your efforts. Thank you to everyone who made this Zine possible. This publication would not have happened without a huge effort from many people. Mostly, thank you to the teens I am so fortunate to work with. You are underestimated by some and yet you remain powerful and inspiring to those around you. Thank you for lending your voices to this project.

-Wick Thomas
THANK YOU

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And most importantly to all of the amazing teenagers in Kansas City.

Want to get involved with the next edition of Unheard Voices? Email wickthomas@kclibrary.org.