

WritersCorps & College Track present

This is Where

Poems on Place and Memory



COMIE SOTIO, 14
from "FAMILY PRIDE"

My life is like a package
Full of surprises
That I don't like
I never wished for this
I never wished for that

If you ask for my age
It does not matter
Because my experience
is a larger number

my experience is a larger number

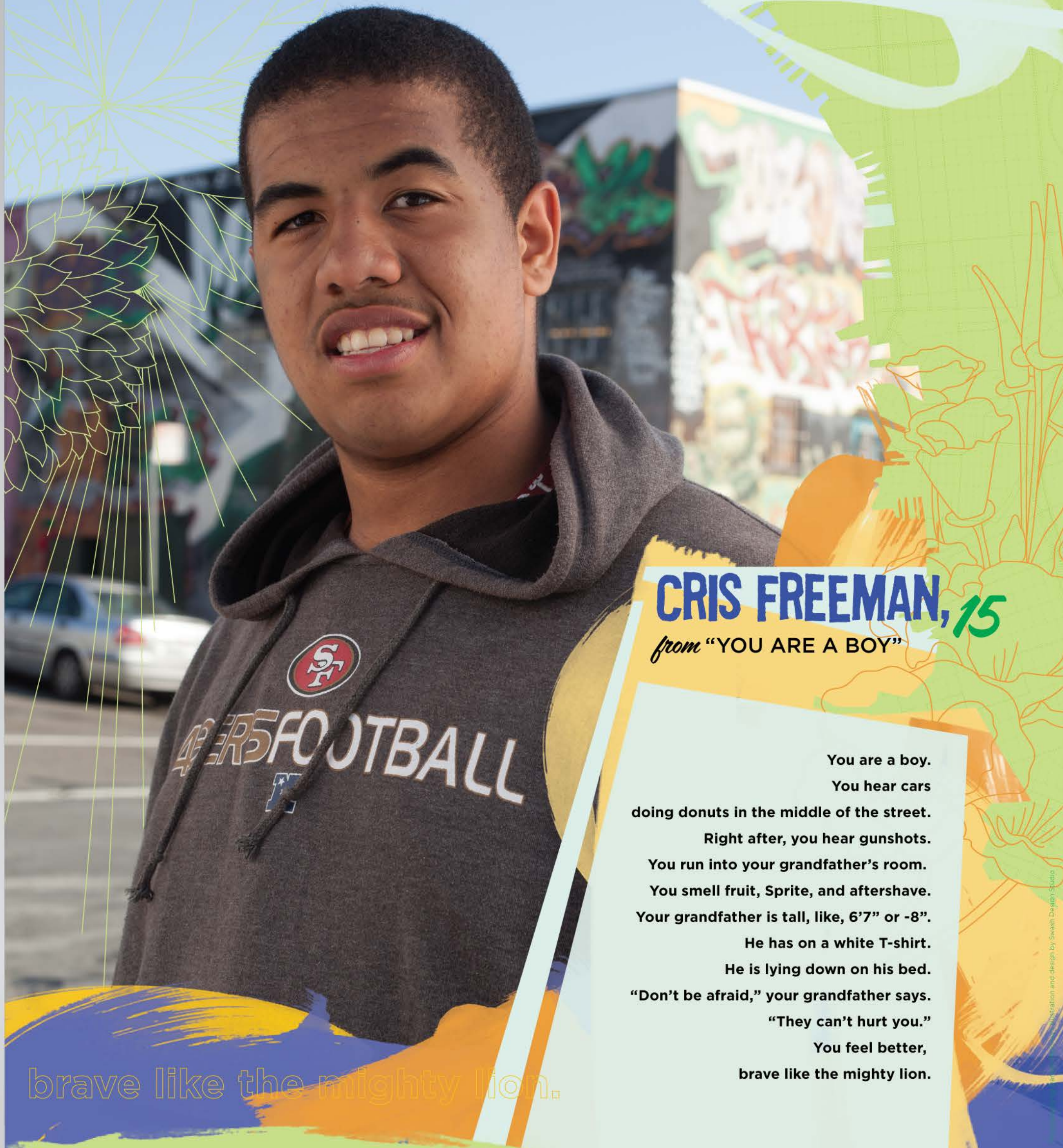
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CRIS FREEMAN, 15

from "YOU ARE A BOY"

You are a boy.
You hear cars
doing donuts in the middle of the street.
Right after, you hear gunshots.
You run into your grandfather's room.
You smell fruit, Sprite, and aftershave.
Your grandfather is tall, like, 6'7" or -8".
He has on a white T-shirt.
He is lying down on his bed.
"Don't be afraid," your grandfather says.
"They can't hurt you."
You feel better,
brave like the mighty lion.

brave like the mighty lion.

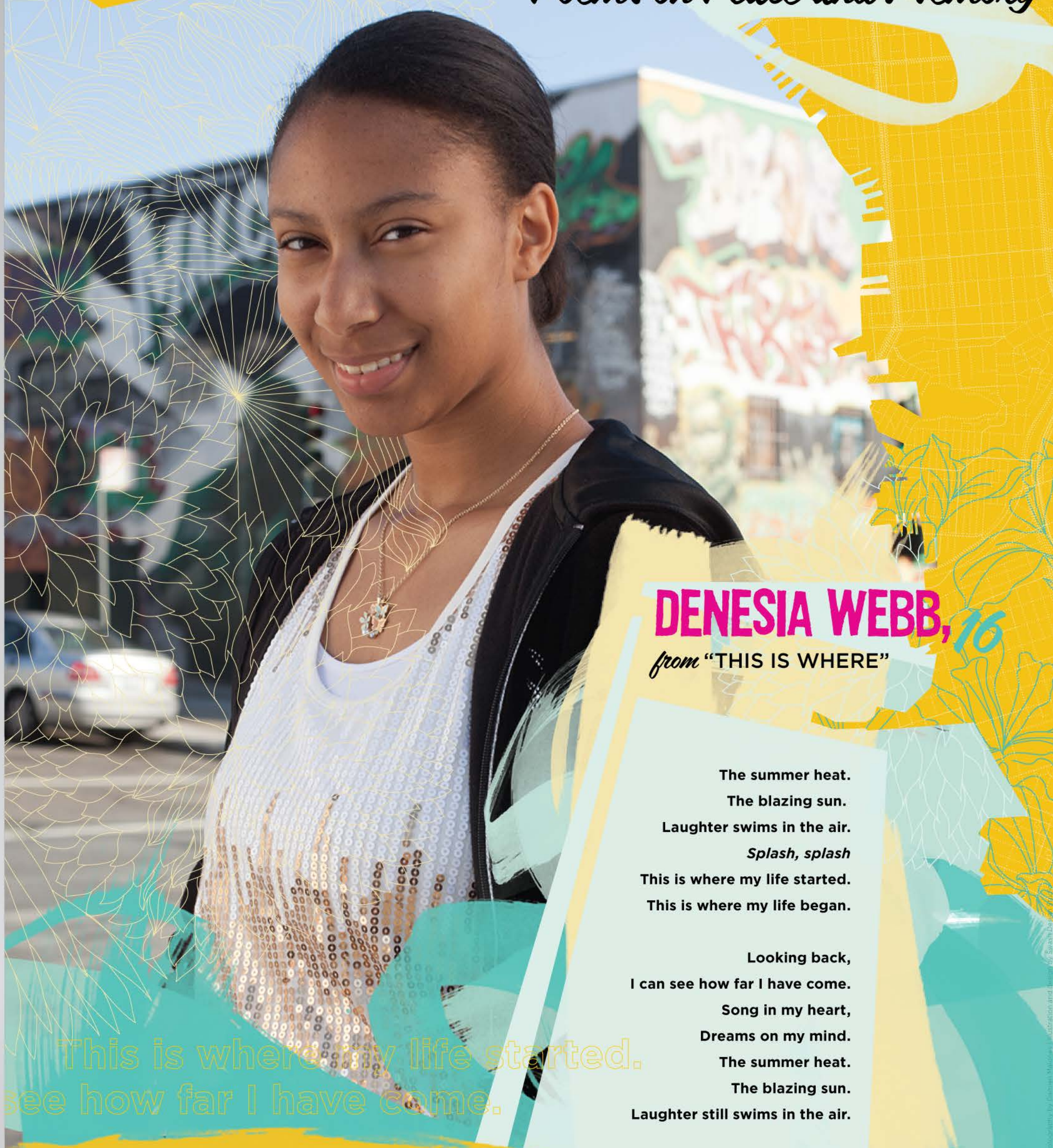
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DENESIA WEBB, 16

from "THIS IS WHERE"

The summer heat.
The blazing sun.
Laughter swims in the air.
Splash, splash
This is where my life started.
This is where my life began.

Looking back,
I can see how far I have come.
Song in my heart,
Dreams on my mind.
The summer heat.
The blazing sun.
Laughter still swims in the air.

This is where my life started.
I can see how far I have come.

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**FA'AOLATOTO
GRIFFIN, 14**

from "BEAUTIFUL ME"

Memory is all but a dream
When you find yourself in reality,
Realizing you had it all
Wrong from the beginning.
Stepping on our graves each day
And waiting for something to change...

when you find yourself in reality
waiting for something to change...

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HADIYA SMITH, 14
from "FITTING IN"

Snickers, whispers, and laughter
surrounded me as I sat. I felt so out
of place. I didn't belong.
But I am the color of rich redwood bark.
It doesn't matter about being
dark-skinned or light-skinned:
We are just people,
African Americans.

the color of rich redwood bark

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**NEHAD
ABDELWAHHAB, 17**
from "LEARNING TO FLY"

*I found my voice
In this city my mind broke free*

This is the city where I found my voice
Here I opened my mouth
And to my amazement lyrics bled forth
In this city my mind broke free
The pen took control
And words flowed from me

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Photography by Carmen Malave. Illustration and design by Sarah S. Kim.

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TROI REESE, 15

from "BAYVIEW'S PURPOSE"

The girl ran away in her dreams,
Deep in the valley beyond content.
She thought she was everyone
else except herself.

She had to know her power to know herself.
The Bayview taught her this secret.

She lost
and then found
herself in the Bayview.

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