



TRACING POETIC MEMORY

IN BAYVIEW-HUNTER'S POINT YMCA STUDENT PROJECTS

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I want to thank the Bayview Hunters Point YMCA staff for the time and talent that they contributed to making the creative work of youth part of the Tracing Poetic Memory in Bayview Hunters Point project.



Searching for a youth perspective is in some way at the core of the project since it exists fundamentally because my family moved out of Hunters Point when I was so young that I remember very little of the experience. My search continues.

A special shout out goes to MaryAnn Alvarado, the Youth & Teen Programs Coordinator, and artists D'wana Stewart and Eustinove Smith, who worked directly with student participants at the Bayview Hunters Point Multimedia Center during our multi-week workshop series. They not only mobilized, prepared, and help to navigate the students through our unique workshop sessions, they also worked with them on project assignments in between the workshops.

Digital Artist [Mark Sabb](#) was instrumental to those sessions, illustrating and sharing digital graphic design techniques with the students. He and [Luis Reyes](#), who later joined the workshop, worked one-on-one as well as in a group setting with students, giving them hands on training in various graphics design applications. Our sessions typically began with me sharing poems and stories related to my experience and my own efforts to trace my family's time in the Bayview Hunters Point. Mark and I presented sample pieces of our own integration of text and images using digital platforms. We encouraged the students to tell their own stories through text and images. We also gave them images in the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood to respond to creatively.

One neighborhood image that we all responded to was the [Malcolm X mural](#) at the corner of 3rd and Kirkwood. The students recreated the image by each adding their own visual and textual twist to the original image of the mural. The Digital Youth Work page, designed by Mark Sabb, opens with the original mural image. The student's recreation is a response to both the mural and my poem "Malcolm is 'bout More Than Wearing A Cap."

Our multi-week Tracing Poetic Memory workshops with students at the Bayview YMCA was an experiment for everyone involved. Mark Sabb and I have collaborated since 2013 and during that time we have become steeped in our own creative sensibilities about integrating text and images, whether the format is simply superimposing a stanza in a digitally produced blue sky in an old black and white photograph of me as a toddler with my Father, or an advanced video poem

combining scrolling text, music, and images of Candlestick Park right before it was imploded. By the time we started working with students at the YMCA we were so rooted in our concept that it seemed straightforward and simple. Still we found ourselves regularly revisiting the concept and stressing the openness of the possibilities. We repeated many times to the students that they could do anything they wanted as long as they combined text and images.

Eventually, the students took our basic concept and applied it to what was important to them. Not what was important to Mark, Luis, and I.

That was just fine with us.

— [Michael Warr](#), Lead Artist, May 2018







Andy
Bayview-Hunters Point YMCA Student
2017



Bayview-Hunters Point YMCA Student
2017





Darrell
Bayview-Hunters Point YMCA Student
2017





It's an **ALMOST**
Typical Love story

