

**INTERNATIONAL DAY OF
PEACE**



2022

Poetry Collection

By Students of The School District of
Philadelphia

The Strive For Peace

By Jack Zhou

Peace starts with the building of bridges,
The disregarding of one another's race and religion.
It starts with a simple dream of all people interconnecting,
And it will end with the whole of humanity resurrecting.

The strive for peace is like crossing an arid desert.
It will not come easy, without pain, or without effort.

But by persevering through this path,
We will not have to suffer violence's wrath.



Outlandish Peace

By Nekiel Jackson-Butler

Vile inscriptions maintain a presence in the currents of our society

Witnessing eyes/closed lips

Abrasive fabrics of identity crumble up in the presence of
phenotypic proponents.

Unspoken cautious treading within foreign boundaries far from the
confined redlines; too alert

Being vigilant can only serve so much good

But how great would the absence of it feel?

The nostalgic abyss that belies any prior constructed binaries.

I am uncertain what that may look like and where I may go from
here.

Instead of the constant need to do more, I may just be able to
learn to rest.

Yet, this blissfully braw billow can not cradle me for long.

Fulfilling the necessary at present in no way ensures that the
future will follow suit.

Then will come when it needs to but for now,

Here we are.



“American Dream”

By Kaddy Ren

McCall

sixty percent Asian blue ribbon school
everyone knows my name

Kaddy Ren

I wear it proudly like my cleanest white
shirt

There I am

Kaddy Ren in every class, every musical,
and back to school night

Selling handmade charms at 3rd-grade
lunch

when \$20 was the most money I ever had
at one time.

In another multiverse, I would have been
the lead in McCall’s 2018 musical

Three-time Honorary Safety Patrol Officer

President of the Student Council

But I left,

Without hesitation

I left.

Masterman

Too shiny to deny

Some friends carry over

but I am not the same Kaddy, instead

Catty? Is that ethnic?

Kaddy— it rolls off their tongues like
sacrilege.

I get my first smartphone

It’s shattered in its first two weeks

I get a room all to myself

But no friends to invite

I go home alone for the first time

And learn to take the long route so as to not run
into any Big Kids or people from school

I go to school the next day and the day after that
and the day after that—

an American dream.

She is still there where

I was happy

Leaning on her father’s shoulder

Singing American songs that only the two of them
could hear over the sound of the bus’s AC and
motor

With layers of sweatshirts over her white polo and
blue leggings.

I wish I could reunite with Kaddy Ren once more

Tell her hold on to your family’s native language

Cherish the hallways you will struggle to
remember one day

Look out for others like you

Correct people until they get it right

Have faith in the universe and yourself

that there will come a day when you can finally
feel all taken care of.



“I Can’t Breathe”

By Violet M.

We all need to breathe. So why does it feel like I’m suffocating? Why does it feel like every time I step out of my house I’m walking on eggshells? Why does my body tense up every time I see a cop car? Don’t we all bleed red? Don’t we all have muscle, and bones? Why is it that this alarm has been ringing for 147,252 days and we are still fighting? Fighting for ourselves. And fighting for our community. I will stay fighting. Until the alarm turns off. Until there is peace.



“Beautiful We Are”

By Nola L.

Once upon a time, we dreamed of a place with peace and love. We found that place. And we took it. And we turned it into the word we know today. We demolished it. People tried to fight back. Tried to do what we should. But systems were put in place to keep those people down. From that seed grew racism, sexism, homophobia, and hatred. These things were able to achieve a more “perfect” union, but only to those who could barely see. So far away from the problem, it was only a spec of dust. But they were wrong.

There were mountains and mountains of problems. So when the dust settled this is what it was like: Some sit, some stand, some work, some relax, some have basic human rights, and some don't. And that was that. Until we realized that silence was not beauty or tranquility. It was just hatred, pain, and misery.

We, the people, arrived and we changed it. We gave them perspective. We took what was rightfully ours. And from that sprouted beautiful real authentic peace. We took the world into our arms like a child crying after horrific events. We took this world and it brought us so much closer to victory. We are not there. We may never get there. But we are better. We formed a more perfect union. We did not fix it. We changed it. We are now like a rushing river, always moving, bringing prosperity and life. A beautiful thing. Beautiful I am. Beautiful you are. Beautiful we are.



Taking the Shackles

By Akofa D.

I'm taking back my fear.
I'm taking back my happiness.
I'm taking back the ability to express myself
I'm taking back the keys and unlocking the cell you left me to rot in,
So you could mold my corpse into a false image for my descendants to see.

I will take back all that you took from me.
I will walk free with no passed down shackles on my feet.
I'm ending the cycle.

Generations after me will feel pride and not shame,
They will understand their self-worth is more than what they are told.
So when they try to knock us down, we will not fall into the cruel
stereotypes and assumptions

We deserve peace
We deserve joy
We deserve not to be heckled and taunted.
We deserve to live our lives without fearing you

I'm taking back my right to be me
I'm taking back freedom
I'm taking off the shackles you put on my great-great somethings' feet.



Children

By Hidaia Ali

I was once
Playing in dirt sand or just looking up in the sky
Beyond you and me
What do you really see
Is it the truth that lies beneath your beauty?
Skin glows radiantly regardless of what shade
Together can't we play?
Mother told me once
that there is something that keeps us apart
I do not understand
Far as my mind will reach
I know we have many ways that we are in common don't you see?
My heart beats allowing me to breathe
All the wonderful smells that greet me
You do the same
My eyes allow me to see not only who is standing in front of me
Views of mountains that stretch far across the land that my very feet will meet
You do the same
Allowing me to walk to places I desire the most
Sitting under the sun so close to the ones I love the most
You do the same
So tell me what difference is there between you and me
Regardless of personality why won't you speak to me
History will only repeat if we don't change the script
Of lies and publicity
Beyond the eyes of those who do not believe
That you and I cannot stand hand in hand
Because together we will let the children of tomorrow
Play in the dirt or sand and look up into the sky
Because in all honesty
Mother was wrong
We are all one big family



My poem is about Black Lives Matter

By Yajaira Polite

and in black lives matter
they killed George Floyd and Brianna Taylor
the cops and the cops sprayed pepper spray
and they Trevon Martin they also broke in to stores
and all lives matter and our skin it
also so much hate in the world and it also black people in
the world and white people and chinse people Spanish
people and Russian people and English people and
French and people
different people all over the world
and people also said no justice no peace
and I don't why is so much hate in the world
and Pnb Rock got shot and robbed.



Peace

By Laney Robinson

All I want is peace.

Not having to put my hands up and get shot because of a brush.

All I want is peace.

Not having to worry about the police accusing me of something I didn't do.

All I want is peace.

Not having to worry about the police coming into my home and killing me.

Can I get that? Can I get peace?

It's my skin color that scares you, right?

My hood is up because of the cold. But instead, I have to raise my hands
and get on my knees.

All I want is peace.



Mirror

By Tayona Cooper

*Females are like flowers just dying to be picked,
But like Mirrors once broken they can't be fixed.*

*She wants to be loved and treated right
Yet when you're angry you wanna fight*

She cries in the mirror wondering what she did wrong...

*1,2 Then she hears a Dong
3,4 here comes her favorite song
5,6 She just wants to get along
7,8 She wants to be strong
9,10 Does she even belong?*

*She wipes her tears and sighs in regret
And repeats those words as if she's an addict*

*Females are like flowers just dying to be picked,
But like Mirrors once broken they can't be fixed.*



Differences

By Arianna Torres

I am a girl,
Just like billions of others
I bleed red,
Just like billions of others
My hair is brown,
Just like billions of others

We all start out as babies,
Wondering where we are
All of our minds aren't fully developed
We can only get so far
So we rely on our parents to help
But just like billions of others,
Sometimes they don't

We all have different problems
We all have different opinions
All of us our human with our own emotions
All of us are human with our own reactions
All of us are valid
All of us are loved

Just because we are different
Does not mean we are bad
One normal is not the same as another
One person is never the same as another
But with each difference
Comes all kinds of appreciation

Racism tells us our differences are wrong
It tells us to hate and hurt
But as kids as we love everyone
We are not born racist and instead it is taught
But as we grow we now think our own thoughts



End Racism, Build Peace

By Aaliyah Gordon-Valentin

END RACISM,BUILD PEACE!!!!

RACISM IS VERY BAD AND RUDE TO
BLACK PEOPLE AND HISPANIC PEOPLE
BUILD PEACE WITH THEM AND BE
FRIENDS WITH US BLACK AND
HISPANIC PEOPLE,SO END RACISM
AND BUILD PEACE!!!!!!!



Untitled

By Keiton Dressler

Oh how I wish for people to roam free, where a world would not treat
gun violence like a fish in the sea
The wrongly accused, and the absent minded, please let people be
unbinded, by the racism that follows, leaving people's hearts so
hollow, did studies teach us nothing at all?
History shouldn't repeat with better technology,
Racism should be stopped, don't leave a stain on the studies of
anthropology
Its inhumane to put others below you
Equality is what this world needs
Not more obstacles to hurdle,
With communities and all, Schools and buses,
In the end I hope no person, because of who they are, goes
distrusted.



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