

Poetry/Song Contest

Below are examples of Philadelphia University student poetry entitled "I am from." Using these examples and the variety of murals featured in Philadelphia Murals and the Stories They Tell as inspiration, write a poem or song entitled "I am from" about yourself and the community from which you come.

i am from

I am from Schultzes and Mohrs.
I am from Polacs and Germans, Italians and Irish, and don't forget that smidgen of French.
I am from a concrete Metropolis commonly referred to as suburbia,
I am from "the value of a dollar," and the lawn is mowed once a week.
I am from "milk with dinner," and "finish your plate!"
I am from "it's time for homework," and "it's time for practice" at the same time.
I am from "Take your brother with you!" and "Have fun!" at the same time as well.
I am from "Made in America" and "Eagles Pride!"
I am from...

--AJ Schultz

i am from

I am from Socorro and Juan from Mictil and Velázquez.
From el barrio, la loma, la isla d'encantación.
From the city of lions.
I am from quenepas, arroz con pollo, pernil, bacalao, and guinimos
From adobo and sofrito users,
From grandmothers who cook better than any other.
I am from people who were exterminated, but still live on
From Tainos, African slaves, and Spanish conquistadors
From bloodlines that make me potent and volatile
I am from quick tempers, passion, and satire
I am from "sangre caliente," Latino hasta la muerte," and "viva Borinquen."
I am from Catholics who dance to salsa and meringue,
Who are loud even in church
From Christmas and Three Kings day.
I am from a crowded city where people work hard all day
And are loud all their life.
From a city whose heart beats to a Latin rhythm
I am from people who are proud of their hibarito.
From Bon Jovi, Elvis Crespo and Korn
I am proud of my destiny in from of me and the blood of fighters moving through me.

--Jonathan Velázquez

If you have questions about the First Year Summer Project, please call the Office of the Dean of Students at 215-951-2740 or e-mail us at studentlife@PhilaU.edu.

MY
COMMUNITY

MY
PERSPECTIVE

First Year
Summer Project
2004

Philadelphia University

MY COMMUNITY MY PERSPECTIVE

Beginning any new experience requires two basic steps: knowing where you've been and where you're going. Embarking on your Philadelphia University experience is no different. The First Year Summer Project will help you reflect on where you've been, who you are and what your home community is like. Once you've arrived in the fall, we'll take care of the second step—making sure you know where you're going.

Your efforts with the First Year Summer Project will culminate in two specific ways in the fall: an exhibition during Family/ Homecoming Weekend in October and through a publication entitled Open, where we will feature many of the finest examples of student work. Winners in three categories will receive gift certificates ranging from \$100 to \$500.

The First Year Summer Project will use as its main source of inspiration and examples the book Philadelphia Murals and the Stories They Tell. In the book you will find a diverse and colorful collection of murals and narratives about Philadelphians and their neighborhoods. It's important that you read Philadelphia Murals and the Stories They Tell carefully and bring it to campus in the fall; it will also be used in several of your first year courses, including Writing Seminar I, Historical Understanding I, Environmental Science, Art History and Design Foundations I.

The Project Options

Throughout Philadelphia Murals and the Stories They Tell are examples of artists using murals to depict themselves and their communities. Using these as examples from which to draw inspiration, you are asked to employ your talents and interests in one of four ways: drawing/painting; essay writing; poetry composition; and/or collage. Submissions will be collected on Monday, August 30th during New Student Orientation.

Mini-Mural Contest

On a canvas no larger than 11 x 14 inches, use any variety of materials (oil paint, watercolor, pencil, charcoal, etc...) to depict one of the following about you and where you are from:

- Annual neighborhood traditions (see pages 96-97, 111 for examples)
- Heroes of the area (pages 26, 44, 78, 92)
- Ethnic roots (pages 21, 70)
- A concept central to a neighborhood's character (pages 48, 124)

Essay Contest

In a one page essay (approximately 500 words), respond to one of the following questions:

- 1 On pages 94-95 of Philadelphia Murals and the Stories They Tell, the authors profile muralist Parris Craig Stancell and his work. Stancell's work is clearly and directly impacted by his experiences as a teenager. How might your own experiences as a teenager impact your life's work and the choices you make as an adult?
-or-
- 2 Pages 21 and 70 of Philadelphia Murals and the Stories They Tell feature artistic depictions of a neighborhood's ethnic heritage. What were the ethnic influences on the culture in which you were raised? How has it changed since your childhood? How did it impact you as a person? You may want to refer to the last page of this packet for an example; it features an essay from Open, a published collection of Philadelphia University student writing, entitled "Childhood Cultural Autobiography" by Christopher Ngo.
-or-
- 3 Some murals in Philadelphia Murals and the Stories They Tell depict an idea or concept that is central to the character of its location. For example, the mural on pages 48-49 and described in Chapter 2 depicts the struggle for racial harmony in the Grays Ferry section of Philadelphia. Another example would be the mural on pages 124-125 that depicts the long tradition of performing arts on nearby Broad Street. What concept is central to the character of your hometown or neighborhood? Why is that concept important in understanding your community? How is that concept evident to your community members and visitors from outside the community? How has that concept shaped you as a person?

Collage Contest

On a canvas no larger than 11 x 14 inches, use any variety of materials (photographs, textiles, drawings, words) to depict in a collage one of the following about you and where you are from:

- Annual neighborhood traditions (see pages 96-97, 111 for examples)
- Heroes of the area (pages 26, 44, 78, 92)
- Ethnic roots (pages 21, 70)
- A concept central to a neighborhood's character (pages 48, 124)
- Daily life and vocations (pages 29, 113)

You are encouraged to draw particular inspiration from the variety of characters, sites, sounds and cultural icons portrayed in the murals on pages 63 and 70