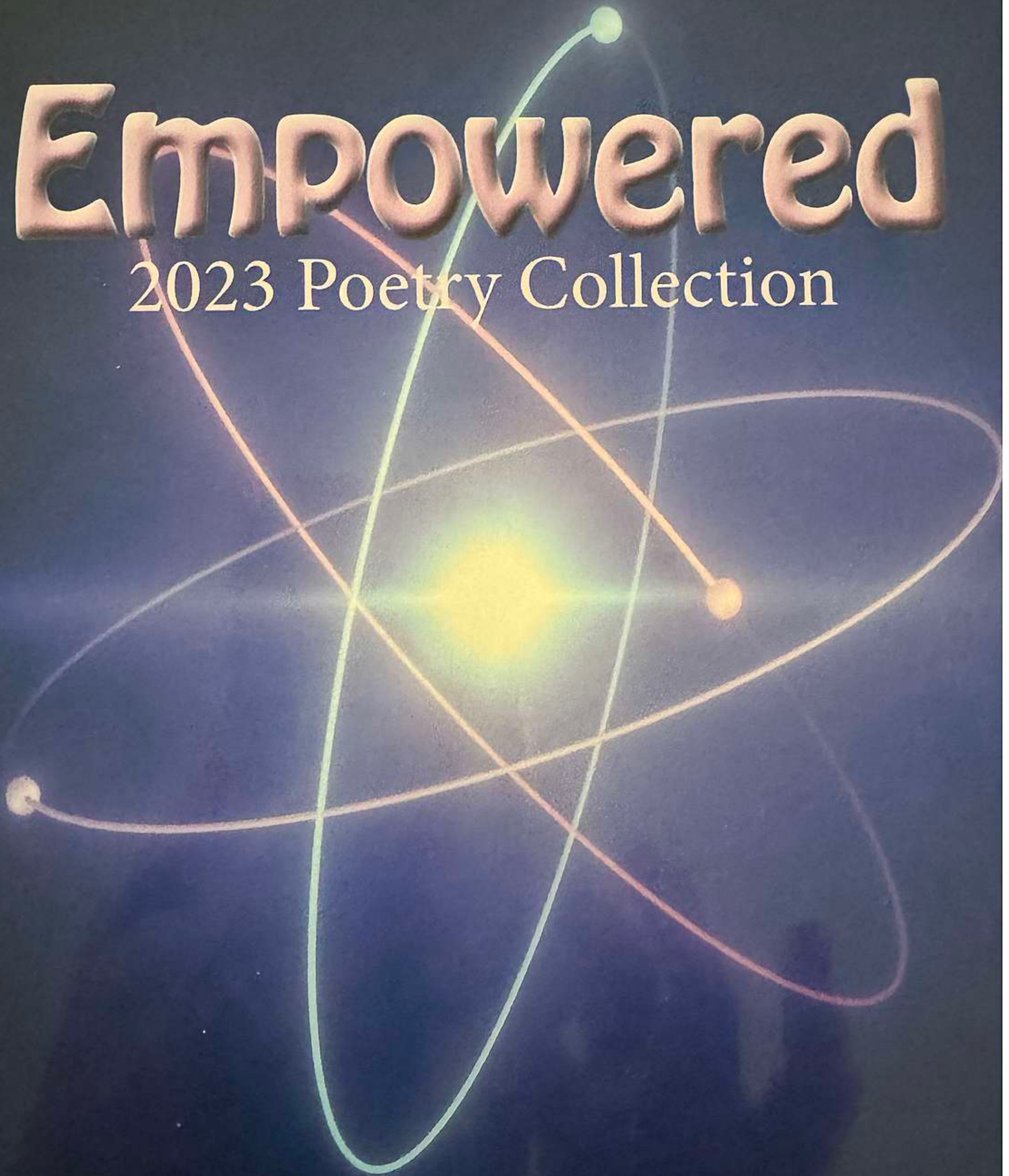


Empowered

2023 Poetry Collection



Empowered represents our student authors as accurately as possible.

Every effort has been made to print each poem
as it was submitted with minimal editing
of spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

All submissions have been formatted to this compilation.

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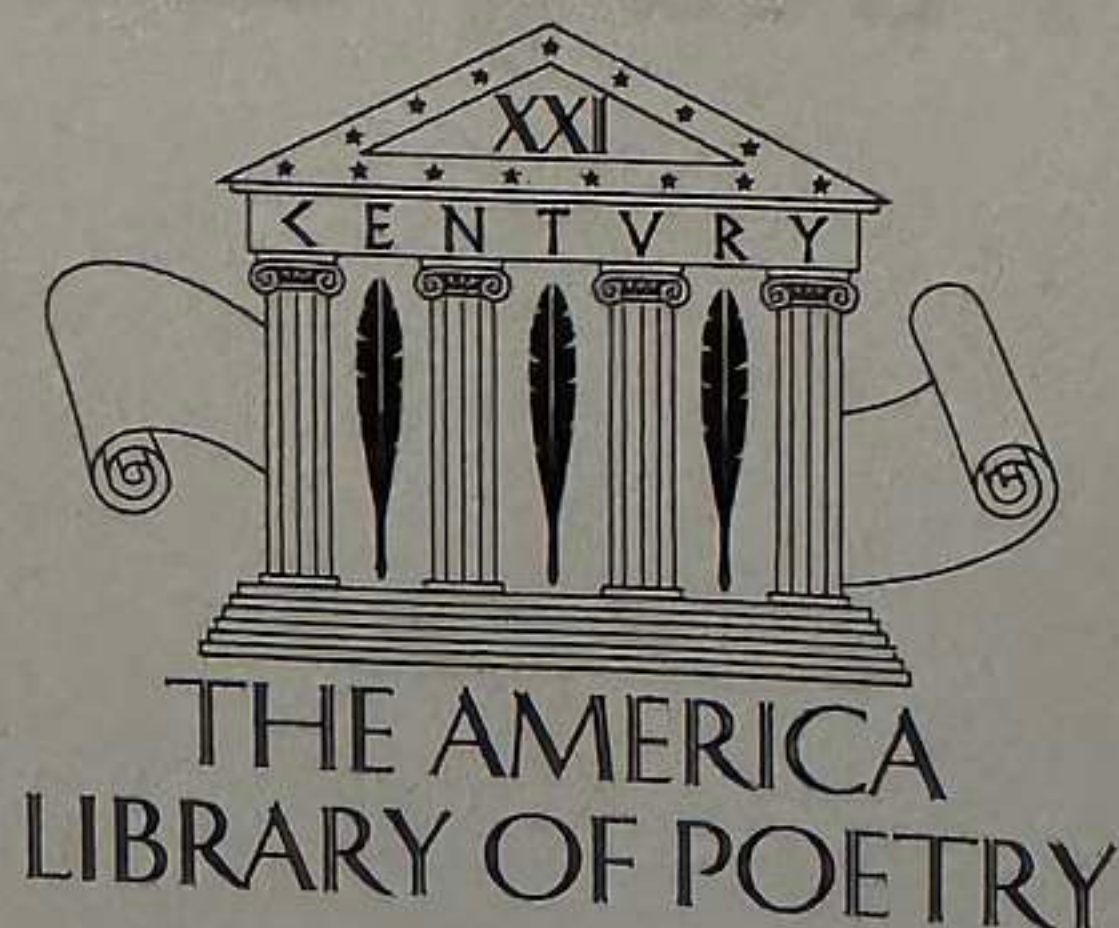
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Empowered

... In memory of RE Carter
(September 26, 2007 to June 5, 2023)
(Student Author)

Pride In This Country by RE Carter

I am something you see in times of need, the reason many sacrifice
You don't see me much anymore, but I am alive and well amongst many
Lots of people seemed to have lost me, but those who still have me are proud
I was there in 1776, Omaha in 1944 on those beaches
I was there when those towers fell and many came together
I've been alive over 200 years and I will thrive for many years to come
I've been there through the sad times, the hard times and the good times
I'm the reason many have fought for
And even though you don't see lots of me anymore
I am still Alive
I am American Pride

... In memory of Mateja Turner
(December 30, 2003 - February 21, 2023)
(Student Author)

My Trumpet by Mateja Turner

In the band room lays a trumpet. There are chairs in a neat row.
Stands with sheet music. Lockers with great instruments inside.
The greatest instrument of all is the trumpet. It's a graceful sound when played right.
It's a calming sound. It's a beautiful melody. It's a happy tune.
It is one of the loudest instruments in any band.
It's a shimmering gold that shines in the light.
Some are a wonderful silver. But mine is a shining, sparkling gold.
It kind of tastes like metal.
The bad thing about trumpets is when you can taste the valve oil
as you inhale before playing.
You can taste the spit flying through the mouthpiece.
As you play, you can smell the metal of the trumpet and other instruments.
The smell of sweat is a sign of hard work. It's really not the best smell
This pride at its finest, my mind's voice being brought out in a loud outburst
My heart pouring out a hole, through the air for people to love
The melody of a trumpet

Foreword

There are two kinds of writers in the world.

There are those who write from experience,
and those who write from imagination.

The experienced, offer words that are a reflection of their lives.
The triumphs they have enjoyed, the heartaches they have endured;
all the things that have made them who they are,
they graciously share with us, as a way of sharing themselves,
and in doing so, give us, as readers, someone to whom we may relate,
as well as fresh new perspectives
on what may be our common circumstances in life.

From the imaginative,
come all the wonderful things we have yet to experience;
from sights unseen, to sounds unheard.

They encourage us to explore the limitless possibilities
of our dreams and fantasies,
and aid us in escaping, if only temporarily,
the confines of reality and the rules of society.

To each, we owe a debt of gratitude;
and rightfully so, as each provides a service of equal importance.

Yet, without the other, neither can be truly beneficial.
For instance, one may succeed in accumulating a lifetime of experience,
only to consider it all to have been predictable and unfulfilling,
if denied the chance to chase a dream or two along the way.
Just as those whose imaginations run away with them never to return,
may find that without solid footing in the real world,
life in fantasyland is empty.

As you now embark, dear reader,
upon your journey through these words to remember,
you are about to be treated to both heartfelt tales of experience,
and captivating adventures of imagination.

It is our pleasure to present them for your enjoyment.

To our many authors,
who so proudly represent the two kinds of writers in the world,
we dedicate this book, and offer our sincere thanks;
for now, possibly more than ever,
the world needs you both.

Paul Wilson Charles
Editor

Home Is Where the Heart Is by Natalie Hsieh

Home is where the heart is
Not a place with a roof and wall
Not where you live
But places and people
A feeling in your soul
Home is when my feet kick the ball
Soccer's there even when I fall
Winning or losing it doesn't matter
Storm or sun my team's together
When we are playing they are my family
Home is at my favorite amusement park
On the coaster I'm ready for the drop
My mom, my friends, I accompany them all
When I'm done I'm ready to go again
Pain and worry don't exist in a place like this
Home is like my childhood swing
When I had no worries and could feel the breeze
Home is my friends, their minds and voices
They will listen to my stories and tell their own
My heart is whole when I'm at home

When the Goddess Gaia Was a Flapper by Amber Lin

Wizened face of Grandmother peers up at me
Through the glass casket. There I gaze
At the goddess Gaia herself, head crowned
With a rhinestone headband, a swan's feather curving.
Her pearly tresses entwined with dew drops,
Heavy eyelids smudged with crushed blackberries,
Lips like overripe plums.
Her eyebrows are graying, but as arched as a fleeting deer's leap,
Her eyes are flint, glazed with spring rain and sulfuric acid.
Her ivory knees show below her fringed dress,
Sequins of molten gold, and I think of her whirling
In the hazy bourbon dim, charmed by Armstrong's ragtime.
Grandmother, a cobra lily among thistles,
Who lives after death, her imposing ghost
Haunting sisters who plotted against her
And lingering in the bedrooms of her lovers.
Now Grandmother lays her gentle head on pressed velvet,
Arms slender like saplings, bones of liquid caesium,
Listening to the swinging of the saxophone,
Gilded Queen of the night in a dulling city.

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