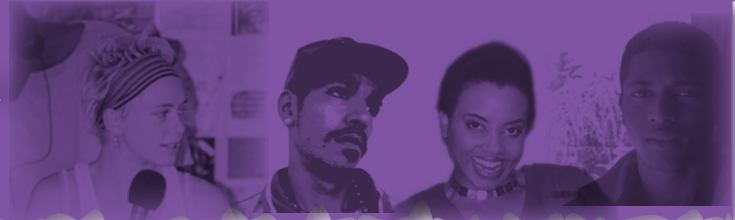


THE ASCENT



An email newsletter for supporters and funders of Art from Ashes Inc. and the Phoenix Rising poetry therapy program. Art from Ashes Inc. is a nonprofit organization that empowers high-risk youth through poetry and other creative therapies.

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July/Aug. 2006

ART FROM ASHES SUMMER PROGRAMS IN FULL SWING THANKS TO OUR DONORS!

So far this summer *AfA* has worked with Bruce Randolph Middle School's Summer Program, has conducted a preliminary session at the Family Crisis Center, and has returned to The Spot, thanks to our donors.

Our drive to raise money for organizations in need of our services over the summer has resulted in \$3,900 of the \$5,000 we need. We are working on raising the remaining funds to continue our work through August.

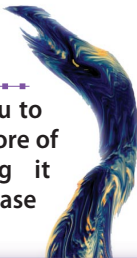
Many of the young people with whom we work are out of school, unsupervised, unemployed and/or homeless. Those in treatment have little to encourage them. Allowing these youth to rise above their circumstances and believe in their power is so important.

If you would like to help young people in trouble find hope and healing through poetry, please send a donation.

PLEASE REMEMBER...

There are many ways for you to help if you are unable to donate. We always need volunteers — especially an accountant to donate a couple of hours a month. Or you can support our organization by attending an **upcoming adult workshop**. Two new sessions start in August: Intermediate (for those who have completed an Introductory session) on Wednesdays, Aug. 16 through Sept. 20 from 6 to 7 pm; and Introductory on Saturdays, August 26 through September 30 from 10 to 11 am. Each six-week session costs \$150, supplies provided.

And a special thank you to Diana and Peter Skidmore of California for making it possible for us to purchase a new computer!



HOT NEWS

HOORAY & WOO-HOO!

On October 15, Art from Ashes will hold a fundraising gala at the Oriental Theatre, featuring Wendy Woo, a nationally recognized singer, songwriter and musician. We also are excited to welcome her father Bataan, a spoken word artist who was, as was Wendy's mother Jane, a founding faculty member of Boulder's Naropa Institute. The Faigao home was a gathering spot for such literary icons as Allen Ginsberg, Ken Kesey, and Norman Mailer. For more information on Wendy's amazing talent and numerous accomplishments, visit her website at wendywoo.com.

And we'll keep you posted on our own website (soon to be revised, thanks to Streambay.com!).

SO SAVE THE DATE! In addition to Wendy Woo, the event will include a wine tasting, an art auction featuring the work of local artists, and our famous youth spoken word poets. Music, art, poetry, wine, laughter, love—a great way to support our work and have a good time (always a priority)! And it will all be at the exquisite Oriental Theater. Special thanks to Andy at the Oriental and donor Kurt Lewis who made THAT possible, and to Adena Shepherd, our Events Coordinator. Tickets will be \$50.

FEATURED YOUTH POET

Abby first heard about Art from Ashes when she was working at the Colorado I Have A Dream Foundation. She brought a group of "dreamers" to the workshops at The Spot one January evening in 2005. That night Abby went to a coffeeshop and wrote poems until midnight! And she's been coming back ever since.

Q: When did you first start writing poetry?

A: I have always loved writing, but somewhere along the way I decided that poetry was something I was finished with. I used to see writing as a skill that I might be good at once in a while, but thanks to Art from Ashes I have learned that poetry is part of me, and that I carry it everywhere in everything that I do.

Q: How has poetry affected your life?

A: Poetry has empowered me and given me a voice. Now I want to scream my poems off of rooftops, graffiti them on border walls, and pass them out on sidewalks. Through writing I have learned how to express myself. Poetry has changed my perception of myself, which has changed my options in life.

Q: What impact have you seen poetry have on others?

A: I have seen poetry empower people of all ages and all backgrounds. The word is

Attorney Debra A. Conroy, an associate with Fairfield and Woods, P.C., recently joined our Board of Directors. Deb was the legal mind behind our 501(c)(3) application. We're delighted to welcome her aboard!



Abby Templeton (Abby T!), 23

sacred, and once we write down our own words, it becomes possible to realize our personal power and our value.

Thanks, Catherine, and everyone at Art from Ashes! Big love and keep writing!

[Editor's Note: Abby T. has personally raised \$650 from friends and family by asking for donations to continue our programs through the summer! Abby is an amazing young woman in so many ways.]

Poetry

by Abby Templeton, 23

In an upstairs
sheltered room
behind night sirens
on Denver streets
12 of us unfold ourselves.

Musa cut his heart in two
and passed it around
so we could pick out
pomegranate seeds
and what we call
truth.

A man named John cried,
wishing for family—
the four of them lying together
on the kitchen floor.

Big-eyed Latina to my left whispers,
"Angel, rest in peace,"
the date carried on her shoulder—
only a month fresh.

We make magic when we open—
saving our souls together
with words.

