

POETRY LIVES SCRIPT

Video	Audio
<p>Michael Klam Flojo on Stage Playground intercut with Stage</p>	<p>The word Flojo in Spanish means "lazy," or "lazybones." This poem is called "Your Inner Flojo."</p> <p>Your Inner Flojo lives with his sack exposed to the air And wears a tattoo over his heart that says: <i>Hard Work Often Pays Off Over Time</i> <i>But Laziness, Laziness Pays Off Right Now</i></p> <p>Your Inner Flojo is a narcoleptic Buddhist and has no qualms About rebirthing into a rhubarb, after all, Meditation is really all about sitting and emptying your head Your Inner Flojo can do this.</p> <p>As a missionary, your Inner Flojo encourages you To take the halo off, have it fall to the floor in a bunch Like a pair of string bikini panties, And let yourself go</p> <p>As a quantum mathematician, your Inner Flojo states: A penny saved is 1/258 of your next 40-oz Old English 800</p> <p>The <i>Inner Flojo's</i> motto is thus: "The early bird is the first To get shot. Sleep in. And remember, It is always better to win money than to earn it And if anybody ever tells you differently, They have lost touch with their <i>Inner Flojo</i>. not listen to them. They are insane. Do</p>
<p>Stage</p>	<p>Your Inner Flojo does not memorize poems. Your Inner Flojo reads from the page Because memorizing poems Is a pain in your inner Flojo's ass.</p> <p>Your Inner Flojo loves a Big Ass Like two giant lava bubbles melding forever In a galactic Lava Lamp, loves the song: <i>I like big butts and I cannot lie</i> Although, that's the only line he has memorized Can't really sing the song Like all great slam poets,...he is perfectly content saying The same lines over and over and over again.</p>
<p>Playground</p>	<p>Slackers unite...tomorrow.</p>
<p>Stage</p>	<p>And because lounging is love, never, never give up an opportunity for pleasure.</p>
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<p>Michael Klam Classroom</p>	<p>If you're looking to the Flojo for inspiration, you know, you should probably be careful, because, you know, I'm a teacher. I'm on all day long. Working with kids is sort of an exercise in chaos. Life is work, you know. So I think people, in hearing</p>

	<p>the Flojo, and reacting to the Flojo — 'cause it's gotten a positive reaction — I think it's that side of us that we all have, that we all share; that we all almost in a sense want to get to.... I want to get to the Flojo. I want to go home and kick it. I want to go on vacation. I want to throw my feet up in a hammock. I want to lay on the sand, and do nothing, you know, take it easy. You know the Flojo itself is a poem about being lazy, but right now, in the world, you know maybe it's not the best time to throw your feet up and kick it. Things seem to be getting worse in Iraq, as opposed to getting better. Corruption is at an all-time high. So you know, we want people to think a little bit, and get active, you know. If it takes rising up, and going into a room and popping a little bit, then so be it. Civil disobedience is a good thing. Raising your voice is a good thing. Getting involved is a good thing. And then, once you've done that, go home, relax, take it easy, you've done your part. Throw your feet up, have a good time.</p>
<p>Ant Black <i>Alone</i> Stage intercut with Trainyard</p>	<p>Have you ever had one of those days when all you wanted to do was be alone? I mean no phones, and no television, just alone. And any other time you might be sad or lonely, but this time, just alone, And thoughts of what your life would be, or could be, start to consume you completely. But that's me. Somehow I don't believe I'm a good person who's made some bad choices, I'm really a bad person, who can't hear the right voices And the noiseless echoes of regret reverberate off the empty walls. So I walk. Not fast, not slow, I just walk. I think if I was in New York I would probably take the train. There's something about being surrounded by all of those people, that might make me want to share this pain Or maybe one person will feel my soul cry and say everything will be fine, Or okay. Just like Tuesday or Thursday, I don't remember what day, But I remember her face when the doctor said that she'll be great. But I wondered how could she be fine when we chose to terminate a life? But I believed him when he said the worst part of all of this is the vomiting at night. And night after night we would lie and say we're alright, And it's definitely for the best, because we're too young to raise a baby right. I'd probably heat up the milk and test it and burn my skin off, Or you'd make fun of me 'cause I'd always put his diaper on backwards and we'd call him Kris Kross. He'd be a boy, named Jordan or Nelson or Skyy, Because he would be his own limit on how far he could fly.</p>

<p>Intercut with Churchyard</p>	<p>And he never grew up with the radio, just raised on poetry CD's, But momma taught him to throw up a fist when he mumbled Fight The Powers That Be A B-Boy, or a B-Girl, she'd be the apple of daddy's eye. And when people ask me how I was doing, I would tell them about my daughter's life. And by now, she'd be 3. Country name like Minnie May. And you can tell by how well she colors within the lines, that she is going to get straight A's. One of those really shy, or really confident girls. And she wakes Daddy up in the middle of the night With her Precious Moments Bible asking if we can pray and play church, Because she would bring me close to the God. All of those financial and maturity reasons Are now excuses. I'd give up poetry. And work twelve hours everyday To put a dollar when she lost her little toofus. I know I blew it. Me and her mom could have stayed together if she was there for us to work through it But I'm clueless. I keep a tight face, so no one can see the tears and all this pain, Or guilt. It's just one of those days When I just want to walk, Alone. Not fast, Not slow, Alone.</p>
<p>Ant Black interview</p>	<p>There's this movement goin' on, to where everything about African-American culture is hip-hop, and bling-bling, and girls shakin' their butts in the video, and that's it, that's the substance of our culture. So I definitely hope that spoken word continues to serve as a outlet for people who are trying to shatter those stereotypes.</p> <p>Where I work, there's a parking lot, an abortion clinic. I've seen men that look like complete thugs, or low-lives, or gangsters, whatever, be the perfect gentlemen, because that pain, of a woman that is going through, and that helplessness, that that man feels, they drop everything, and they treat these womans like goddesses. It's a moment that will change your life, if you've never seen someone, after they've had an abortion.</p>
<p>Corey Taft <i>Sex Don't Mean Sex</i> with Stock B Roll</p>	<p>Sex don't mean sex. Sex means hand-holdin', Sex means lip-locking, Sex means hair-pulling, Sex means bed-rocking,</p>

	<p>Sex means passion, Sex means comfort-ability, Sex means compassion, Sex means bone-ability, Sex means love.</p> <p>So there it is, I always want to make love to you. But it's not even like that, Making love means that you're making me love you even more. Just telling me about your day means we're making love. Just going to see a movie together means we're making love. Just looking you in your eyes and telling you how pretty I think you are and I don't, and I don't know how to articulate my love for you in a cool, poetic kind of way means we're making love and I always want to make love to you.</p>
Person in the Street #1	So far, I've really enjoyed it. It's my first one, and yeah, it's pretty awesome.
Person in the Street #2	I myself, I just come to watch poetry and listen to the poetry. I don't really much care about the competition aspectwise, I just like to hear what people have to say.
Raye Rose <i>Pretty</i> on Stage intercut with Stock B Roll	<p>Just a little a bit of a smile, please– Click Flash. Was I Pretty Enough? Pretty enough? For what? Pretty enough to be smiled at by greasy men with horny smiles? Pretty enough to date, to take to prom, to marry, to bear children– pretty enough to hear my grandchildren say, as they flip through my senior year book, soooo pretty.</p> <p>As young girls, we're trained, Barbie in hand, we dream big. Big breasts–big smile–</p> <p>and then we get old and ugly! Said our mothers, shoveling hair dye into their shopping carts, mothers who embarrassed you saying, "These are her first high heeled shoes, she's becoming a woman." And when you did? Well razors scraping against my skin– making me look like an eleven year old– but that's smooth– and that's sexy, and that's what I have to be? Yeah, we got to get our nails done, and our hair did, and don't forget to wax your--- hah !!!!!!</p>

	<p>Just a little bit of a smile—please click flash was I ugly enough? Ugly enough? For what? Ugly enough to give up on all the hot guys? Ugly enough to lie about your bra size? Ugly enough to compromise saying the guys behind you going “heh heh heh” are really sweet underneath! Ugly enough to send your picture to ABC with – "I'm so ugly." And they call back, "Girl, we can help you! Yes, our ultimate makeovers gut out your faces! We erase all traces of your family's bone structure handed down."</p> <p>Were we really molded from Adam's rib just to parade around the garden? 'Cause I'm going to throw all my scales at Weight Watchers' doors— I'm going to eat all my lunches in front of Calvin Klein stores— I'm going to throw all away all of the magazines away because we weren't meant to be looked at— No, we were meant to be heard, and this rib? Has a voice.</p>
Person in the Street #3	Well I mean your beatniks your preppies your...
Person in the Street #4	two people, yeah
Person in the Street #3	Everyone, you know. All different genres come for, for the poetry. It's great. It's great.
Shana Manion <i>Desperate Artist</i> on Stage intercut with poolside	<p>Behold! The domesticated artist declawed. Look beyond the façade to the idealist fraud We've got this case sewn up: Tell her she's a grownup Convince her that dreaming's a sin and wait for her to own up and atone with a life sentence of soft labor Served with the cold comfort of her cubicle neighbors Strung-out on complacency, fiending for more Addicted to stability, creation's a bore. So dependent that you started turning corporate tricks Treating Big-Wig dicks to your sycophant licks So hooked that you made the irreversible choice To trade unique expression for a smooth phone voice (<i>Faceless American Corporation Incorporated, this is Shana speaking, how can I help you?</i>)</p> <p>As much as you would like to spare what's left of your pride You just can't ignore the little voice that whispers inside Risk bad, safe good, right? And even if you could fight What weapons would you use? You've got so much to lose You've gotta pay rent and put food on the table And don't forget your Starbucks and your digital cable The budget is rife with things you don't need Take a look at your life at the warnings you won't heed. Material dependency, a disturbing tendency to consent and be content with all the money that you spent,</p>

	<p>you see Back when you were fresh you had the yen to create But your pampered aging flesh prefers living more sedate A state insipid and colorless, security so bland You heard the mediocrity, obeyed its command.</p> <p>Starving artist is a concept that works so well in fiction But even the best and the smartest will still form an addiction To the comfort of a regularly scheduled routine Take a deep breath, smile, and embrace the machine.</p>
Shana Manion interview	<p>Right now, I am sitting behind a computer screen, daily, doing like data entry, and building spreadsheets, and arranging travel and all that really terribly exciting stuff. And I'm accepting money for that. I don't draw the line on selling out anywhere. I mean, you know that sounds so horrible. I don't know. I mean, I wouldn't like write a poem or do a comic that was totally promoting something anti-myself, that wasn't portraying something honest. But I can tweak the lines of honesty. I can, you know, I'm a pretty flexible individual.</p>
minerva interview	<p>minerva—that's a nickname I got growing up back East. Because now I think about it, you know, I was a sickly child. I didn't move around much, so I hung with the old folks, on the steps, telling stories. And they started calling me minerva, 'cause they said I had an old head. So I been around for awhile, but also longer than that. And I use it. It's my shtick. You got to have a <i>shtick</i>.</p>
minerva <i>Untitled Pseudo Rap</i> On Stage	<p>I split Philly for D.C. with no mattress Because the brother who was supposed to bring it Down here for me wanted to Get up in the thing with me, And I said “NO WAY.”</p> <p>So, my girlfriend copped this Temporary cot off of this white lady And the temporary cot turned permanent Because this other brother came to see me Down at my girlfriend's and he Wanted to get up on the cot with me</p> <p>And I said “OK.” And we worked that cot So hard and broke it and so</p> <p>I was sleeping on this broken down, Temporary, permanently up on milk crates cot.</p> <p>At least until I found a job</p>
minerva interview	<p>Poetry should be entertaining. You got to have serious energy, and I have to have my chops up, you know.</p>
Trish Duggger interview	<p>I love sharing my poetry. I love doing that and this is the perfect, perfect venue for it, you know. It's so much fun. And, I</p>

Trish Duggger interview	don't know, I just love it. I feel like a diva when I'm up there. I love it!
Trish Duggger <i>Hey Good Lookin'!</i> on stage intercut with Stock B roll	<p>[I]f Ernest Hemingway were my house guest, I'd be stirring up osso bucco and paella con whatever. I'd say, Papa smoke that cigar out on the porch.</p> <p>At first, I'd have wondered what to call him. Ernest? Ernie? Mr. Hemingway? I don't think so. I'd be brave and sassy and say, Look, since we're hanging out together, I'll call you Papa and you can call me Trish.</p> <p>At first, I'd wonder where to put him to sleep But I'd have to give him my bed with the king size bed. God knows, I wouldn't want to sleep with him. The beard. The snoring. (Come on. All that macho bravura!)</p> <p>But Lordy! I love Papa's belly laughs and party spirit.</p> <p>I don't know how long Papa'd stay, but the place would be a graveyard without him.</p>
Trish Dugger interview	You have to kind of leave your ego at the door, because even though you might have what you think is a good poem, and what other people think is a good poem, it might not grab the audience. So you have to be prepared for that.
Shana Manion <i>Hollow Dolls</i> On stage intercut with Dolls	<p>This room has the essence of a home for convalescents But the presence of adolescents just doesn't make sense.</p> <p>Shy in the shadow of our shared secret shame Heaping coals of fire, laying claim to the blame A self-imposed solitude—I didn't tell a soul. Not my mother or my father, or THE father and this whole Situation seems to hit me with a loud solid crack To the back of my skull as I lie there on the table on my back Staring at ceiling tiles, a recognition so cruel These are the same tiles I used to stare at back in school So bored, counting holes, couldn't wait to get out</p> <p>Less than two years ago—is this what life is all about About loss and compromise and the guilt that runs so deep A life that would have claimed mine now instead claims my sleep Just a local anesthetic, a syringe between the legs I keep saying that I'm ready but deep inside me, something</p>

	<p>begs To cry out in anguish, but not in upheaval Every part of me resigned to this necessary evil The medication is working—I can't feel my tongue But it hasn't reached the only part I want to feel numb As a side effect, every sound in the room is amplified An unbearable humming from those damn fluorescent lights And then they turn on the machine, and the cacophony starts The angry voice of God booming straight to my heart An accusation in thunder from the strident machine A sin beyond redemption at the age of nineteen</p> <p>Hysterically sobbing, my breath is coming in gasps My right hand tries to plug my ear, my left hand grasps The only hand that was there—the only one near The hand belonging to an anonymous volunteer She doesn't know me from Eve, but in that moment she is all She is my mother and my father, she is me before my fall She is an angel of mercy, she too is starting to cry Her hand is my child, and with my grip I say goodbye</p> <p>Then it's over, and the noise stops, and my breathing's controlled. I'm feeling no pain, just unendurably old And they lead me slowly down those sterile white halls To sit in white wicker chairs with the other hollow dolls.</p>
<p>Shana Manion interview</p>	<p>The weird thing, for me, is I started performing this piece not even that long ago, maybe like a month ago. And when I started, I still hadn't told my mom or my dad. And so here I am, telling like rooms filled with strangers this thing. And I haven't told a lot of the people that I probably should. It's easier, I guess, because even though it is real and I think people, I hope people can gather that, it's still a performance when I'm up there. And I can distance myself a little bit, from the fact that there are lights and I am on an elevated platform and you are all faceless, and I am talking to myself. And it's something I've recited quite a few times now. So at this point it's becoming less and less difficult, you know. Which on one hand, what worries me, I don't want it to become so distant, you know, that I'm utterly detached from it. But it is kind of odd to think that, you know, that I am sharing this part of myself with a whole bunch of strangers.</p>
<p>Alfred Howard <i>Prior To Addressing</i> Stage intercut with stock B roll</p>	<p>Prior to addressing the pressing, stressing issue of war, There's one other issue I'd like to explore And the fact that I don't hear a million voices still shouting complaints Makes me feel faint, frustrates me. It's devastating to democracy George W. Bush is not the president of America Coup d'etat Post-millennial hysteria</p>

	<p>Stolen election Now the demise of life is draped in the disguise of national protection Using media weapons of mass deception To fuel the mass distraction There will be massive repercussions to this war against weapons of mass destruction.</p> <p>[A]ren't we the ones with 10,000 nuclear bombs in the midst of invasion Hatred cannot counter hatred Only love is that sacred</p> <p>Did someone say oil I heard thousands shout with passionate doubt "NO BLOOD FOR OIL" No blood for oil! No blood for oil! No blood for oil! This is the equation that makes my blood boil Blood flooding foreign soils As wealthy men collect the spoils of our front line toils But this is not the message seen on the TV screen We're liberating people from an evil regime Not decimating people with our evil regime Blood in our hands and Blood in the streets. And blood in this poem And blood stains my dreams this nightmare is scary I'm tired I'm weary And I'm tired of the violence And I'm tired of the silence And I'm tired with no rest And ready to protest And raise my voice with the voices of others My sisters and brothers unite in the night Who know words are the only weapons needed to fight Who take pride in this country, but see its need for revision This is my definition of patriotism</p>
Shana Manion interview	Like most artists, I am probably my harshest critic. It's just something, you can't create something then and not look at it and think you could have done better. I think everyone that I've met that does this is on some level a perfectionist.
Trish Dugger interview	The current poet laureate Ted Kooser says, "For every poem you write, you should read a hundred."
Ant Black interview	Most of the spoken word artists I know are actually in it to make some sort of change. Or they're actually in it because they enjoy this art form and they enjoy being creative and expressing themselves in such a fashion.
minerva interview	Have fun with it. Don't try to make a living at it. But if you do, that's so much better.

Michael Klam interview	Language in and of itself is powerful. Not just in a sense that it can be political and hot and heavy, but it can also be very light and sweet and tender. And I see that in my children all the time. I see that in my students as well. A group of 26 kids in a room, it's almost at times like having 26 drunk people in the room, you know. They're susceptible to moments of passion, moments of sadness, you know, moments of joy every—the gamut of emotions, you know. I see it all day long. And I think my interactions with the kids, and the relationships that I've developed through writing have definitely enhanced my performances and my desire to get up in front of an audience and say, "Hey this is what I see in the world, and I want to bring this to you. Check it out." You know, and these, what might be, you know, insignificant moments, to some people if I can write it in a way and bring it to you and go, "Wow, check this out." We can become, in a sense, adventurers through our day, and see in every moment maybe something new, something bright, something challenging, something to make us think, to live a little better.
Shana Manion on Stage	I know, I gotta go write, gotta write that poem about the uterus, right.