

Doing time kills the

Voices Behind Walls

Beats, Rhymes & Chess

((Recording Workshop))

January 21st, 2012*

01.21.2012 | AGENDA | ((NMSTRUMENTALS))

Today's workshop is going to be about new technology. We'll be working on learning the new programs we've got (**Adobe Audition CS5.5 & ACID Pro7**) on a newer laptop. Extended thanks to the NMSU WITS program for their support. With the new software hopefully we can start moving towards the direction of ordering new equipment. As I mentioned before, we now have some funds to work with. For this Saturday I hope to have some music catalogs or some other information that will help us start shopping around. A producer that's helped us in the past who goes by IV the Polymath, has offered to provide his input for any questions we might have about making beats and/or suggestions on what we need to improve our recordings.

On Saturday January 14th, we started a pilot project that for right now is called **((NMstrumentals))** which basically allows JPTC youth time outside of the workshop to work on music production. Much thanks to Fred for donating the laptop and beat making software. This past week the laptop was checked out to the Mesquite Unit so we'll be listening in on what they put together. For those unfamiliar with the software we'll setup training sessions during our workshop to get familiar.

Other than that, we'll be checking out photographs from the January 7th workshop and will also be listening in to this month's new music release thanks to our generous donors. I'll also have a copy of the latest digital album by Immortal Technique for ya'll and we'll be looking into some new titles for our VBW Library. Also just so your know, I'm teaching a class this semester at NMSU that uses the *Hearts & Hands* text by Luis Rodriguez that we have. The class is called Criminal Justice & Youth Outreach. Your involvement with this class and the reading would be greatly appreciated so I'll have the course syllabi on hand this week.

VOICES BEHIND WALLS TOPIC

In our first workshop of 2012 we all got the chance to select some bracelets that were provided from the Performing Life Bolivia program. When you get the chance, please take the time to write a poem/rap dedicated to the youth in Bolivia, or a thank you note, or if you are an artist, a drawing that we can send to them. Let's pay thanks with this week's writing topic and recognize their creative contribution to us and people around the globe. I'll be able to send what you provide by email or mail. This is in recognition of their gifts from one program (and thousands of miles) to another.

THE BEAT WITHIN (WRITING TOPICS) 17.05-17.06*

I. My Destiny – The definition of Destiny: The events that will necessarily happen to a particular person or thing in the future. Do you believe in destiny? Do you believe that your life is planned out for you ahead of time, or you do you believe that it is within your power to change your life at any given point? Or, do you believe that there is something you are destined to accomplish in your life--a purpose for your life that you need to work to achieve? Tell The Beat how you feel about destiny, and what is your purpose?

II. Teach Your Children Well – What things as a society are we NOT teaching our children? What are the things you think are most important for every child to learn in order to be successful and happy? What was not taught to you by family/community, and how has that affected you? We look forward to reading your commentary and/or stories on this important issue.

III. The Toughest Lesson – What have you learned from being in the system? What have you learned about yourself, your friends and family and the system itself? What are the things you are going to take away from this experience? Think about who you are and the things you knew before you came to this hall--how have you changed?

Voices Behind Walls is a creative writing workshop (poetry, Hip Hop/Rap, music, etc.) for youth and we showcase writing, recordings and artwork at our website www.voicesbehindwalls.org and through The Beat Within, www.thebeatwithin.org. We also record poems with the use of a portable recording studio (microphone/laptop) and are involved with helping youth create mixtapes/radio shows with the goal of expanding our knowledge of music. In VBW workshops we encourage reading, participation in chess, critical thinking, original writing, constructive comments about the poetry that is submitted and the following rules: 1.) Respect each other's work, words, reading and discussion; 2.) No unnecessary profanity or explicit promotion of drugs, gang activity or disrespect towards males/females; 3.) No plagiarism. No writer is to submit someone else's writing and take credit. Each is expected to write their own words, thoughts ideas and/or experiences.

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VBW PHOTOGRAPHY | "EQUIPMENT"

PHOTO BY OCOTILLO UNIT



"You live and you learn,
and sometimes you freeze and burn,
but no matter what
I'm always on the search to be the best..."

Mesquite Unit
January 2012

*Excerpt from a poem titled
"Struggles & Drama"

If you'd like to submit poetry/writing to our group please contact voicesbehindwalls@gmail.com for mailing information. We accept electronic copies and print mailing. If you are/were incarcerated, currently in a group home or part of court mandated youth program in West Texas or Southern New Mexico we can assist you in submitting poetry/writing/art to The Beat Within. For more information on Voices Behind Walls and to hear/read the words, voices and music of youth that have participated in our program please visit www.voicesbehindwalls.org. The latest writing topics for The Beat Within are included to the left. Please consider putting together a poem, story or rhyme responding to the topics.