



843?

Past

Present

Future

Meet The Creatives

AYSHA BOWENS IS A 2020 BURKE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE. AS THE VALEDICTORIAN OF HER CLASS AYSHA BRINGS HER THOUGHTFUL AND INTELLIGENT APPROACH TO ALL ASPECTS OF HER WORK AT CONNECKTEDTOO -> TINYISPOWERFUL

MARKELLE E. E. IS A MULTIMEDIA ARTIST WORKING WITH ANY MEDIUM THAT'S LAYING AROUND. THEY ARE BASED IN CHARLESTON SC, BUT IS NOT NATIVE, WHICH IS THE BASES FOR THE PIECE MIXED FEELINGS. MARKELLE CONTEMPLATES HOW THEIR VIEW OF CHARLESTON HAS CHANGED OVER THEIR TIME HER.

BARNEY BLAKENEY A NATIVE OF CHARLESTON, SC. HAS WORKED IN THE FIELD OF JOURNALISM AS A NEWS REPORTER AND COLUMNIST SINCE 1977. HE CURRENTLY IS A FREELANCE WRITER WHO HAS WRITTEN FOR THE CHARLESTON CHRONICLE. MOST RECENTLY BLAKENEY RECEIVED THE CHARLESTON BRANCH NAACP CORPORATE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD, SEPTEMBER 2017

RAYN WITH THEIR PIECE RAYN TRIES TO CAPTURE THE THREE STAGES THEY HAVE LIVED THROUGH AS A CHARLESTON NATIVE. FIRST THERE WAS UNAWARENESS, THEN THERE WAS DISTRESS, NOW THERE IS PRESENT AND THEN THERE IS A HIDDEN UNREADABLE TEXT IN THE TOP RIGHT CORNER THAT REPRESENTS A FURTHER STAGE SOMEWHERE IN THE FUTURE

JESSE TORTORELLA

WHEN YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES, COULD YOU IMAGINE THIS
THE SCHOOL THAT YOUR GRANDMOTHER TAUGHT AT
WHERE YOU MEET YOUR OLDEST CHILDHOOD FRIENDS AT
THE SCHOOL YOU WENT TO AS A CHILD, TO BE CLOSED
NOW YOU ARE WISHING YOU TOOK MORE TIME TO REMINISCE
WHEN YOU WALKED ACROSS THE STAGE AS A 5TH GRADER

WISHING THAT YOU COULD TRADE THAT MOMENT,
TO WALK ACROSS THAT STAGE NOW
TO KNOW WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO SAY A SPEECH
TO CLASSMATES , FRIENDS, TEACHERS AND FAMILIES WHO,
IMPACTED YOUR PRESENT AND YOUR FUTURE

THE FUTURE, MAY YOU BRING YOUR ALL TIME SUMMER
BREEZE, PALMETTO TREES AND SWEET TEA!

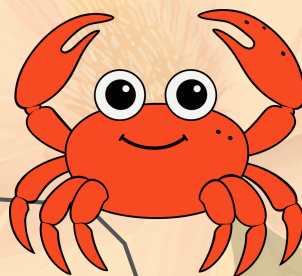
Having lived in Charleston nearly all of my 67 years of life the Cooper River bridges typify the communities evolution from past to future. As a small child I lived in the Cooper River Court public housing Complex that laid in the shadow of the two lane John P. Grace Memorial Bridge locally called the The Old Cooper River Bridge which opened in 1929. It was replaced by the three lane Silas N. Pearman Bridge that opened in 1966 which was replaced by the eight lane Arther Ravenel Bridge which opened in 2005.

The city trash dump across East Bay Street from the complex later became a landfill where commercial development now is taking place. In the next decade the landfilled area will also accommodate a water front hotel and eventually an extension of Charleston's Waterfront Park.

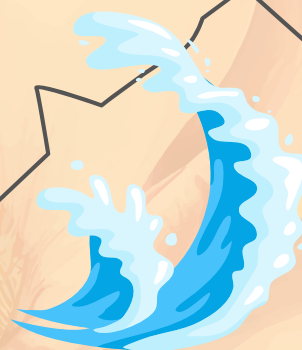
what does my past, present, and my future in Charleston look like? That's an interesting thing to think about because I was not born here. In my past, when I was five or so, Charleston was the place my Mom and Dad dragged me to via a ten hour car ride. Away from my family and friends--or whatever friends a five year old could have had back then--and away from everything I loved. My mom says the whole drive down, I sat in my carseat with my little arms crossed. Pouting all the way! I know, I sound like a bit of a brat. I'm sure they would agree with you. When we did move down to South Carolina, we lived in North Charleston. First across from the Air Force Base in an apartment, then in the Windsor Hill neighborhood off of Ashley Phos. Road. Conveniently located near a Food Lion and my first job, Franki's Fun Park. We didn't have a lot of money, as the story for many families in North Charleston goes, but my neighborhood and my community were ideal. Friendly, easy to get everywhere and get everything I needed,. When I moved Downtown to attend the College of Charleston, a new love for Charleston arose in me. Although the flooding and tourists and parking were overwhelming, the beauty and sunlight and FOOD and history of this place was overwhelming in a good way--I was given a new Charleston, a new part of my city to hold dear and protect and cherish. This city supported me. It's cobblestone streets held me as I walked with friends each night, aimless and laughing and looking at the moon. The late night restaurants and food stands, the corner stores and sweetgrass roses sold by little boys, and the annoying throngs of Citadel cadets were my Charleston. My past Charleston looked like a warm sunset with blue, purple, and pink swirling in the orange glow. A sweet, salty breeze.



past



present



future



My present Charleston is much more intimidating, more ruthless than the fun one I knew in college and growing up in North Charleston. Post-grad life is

a bit tortuous, but also quite a good teacher! Bills. Bills. Bills.

And always working! I don't know if it's just me, but it seems that the rat race

of paying rent in Charleston is not even a race at all.

Because there's no finish line in sight. You're always running. My present Charleston is one that almost seems to be a large black hole

where no matter what I do or where I work or how many jobs I have, I can never get out of that black hole. I have daydreams now of moving away, maybe even forever. To a big city or an island. Or Germany. Who

know! I know there is still work to be done

here, for the arts and gentrification and advancement of the community. My present Charleston is suffering.

The work to make this city a place for everyone is immense and there are so many good people working on it! It's admirable. I have felt some change myself! But as far as continuing this work here, I know in my heart that is not my place. As someone who doesn't claim this city, who was born elsewhere and whose heart is also elsewhere, I am not the one to have this city's redemption on my shoulders. I think my future Charleston looks like an ideal escape. Still a tourism and wedding capital, still beautiful.

I hope to still see small businesses and even more starting up. I hope to see more black and brown families doing well. I hope to see more art all over the city, murals on walls and on the bridges we love so much. Maybe the future Charleston I see will be one I don't mind coming back to.

?ANCESTOR?

?ELDER?

?MIDDLE AGED?

THE
YOUNG
ADULT
MOVES
TOWARD

PRESENCE

THE
TEEN
IS
DISENGAGED

THE CHILD
--- IS ---
UNAWARE

P A S T

I was born elsewhere. I moved to Charleston as a kid. It did not matter where I was, whether Charleston or my hometown, I was growing up. I mean we all did the same things growing up, digging holes, getting beat up by your older siblings, going to school, reading books (or lack thereof reading books in my case.) I never took in the culture outside of where I was.

I lived in Summerville, in a plastic house, that when residents drove past, the mere presence irritated them. I made my life on playing music, cross-country and academic pursuits. I went to college in Columbia. I studied political science, studied the classic writings of political theory, made a construct of myself with stoicism philosophy, and learned what to think about and ask why.

I reminisce the days I spent on the field with the marching band.

Getting yelled at by my drum instructor, or in the classroom, passing a test that I never gained anything from. I learned from it. I learned how to grow, accept the shortcomings of myself and work as hard as I can to understand why I am and was wrong. I learned the

Columbia area I was in and made a home within it. I had the city of Charleston to reluctantly return to and a plan to make it there. I still hated Charleston, Summerville or any area I missed in between. I hated the urban sprawl unto my lawn.

Infections of rent hikes, commercialism, tourism and the traffic, especially the traffic.

P R E S E N T

Today I woke with hopes of applying to jobs I will never get in the public sector. Experience qualification damaging every bullet point of my resume. Lack of job creations affecting my and everyone's hireability. That lack of job creation only circumvented by Boeing, Bosch, and SpaWar.

Today I work construction. I lay brick and stone, combine certain kind of rocks with other rocks. And add water to that concoction to paste those brick and stones together on houses owned by the rich. They are building winter homes or building houses in areas for a better school district.

Today, they had the choice to move anywhere, but they chose Charleston and I do not know why. In turn I watch the families and culture that will never leave. I mean, why would you stay in this urban sprawl, rent hiked, commercial trap, traffic ridden Charleston? I cannot say. I can only say for myself; I intend to build something here. For Charleston and I. I hope to make this place a better place. That is probably the same for those that move here, except they make the traffic worse, so we must hate them.

I can say though, this culture, found between the mass immigration of Ohio residents and reluctant exodus by current residents is starting to form. But what this Ohio resident / Boeing loving culture is lacking now, is what the residents have to offer, a unique type of culture. One that stops to talk to you on their way to work. One that offers you their unwarranted advice. One that would give you the shirt from their back if you asked for it. One that is so unique in character and beauty you are the weird one for asking why you would not move here. One that allows you to make Charleston as big as you want, although the peninsula is only so big.

This synthesis is starting to take form and it will become uniquely Charlestonian in the future.

F U T U R E

Tomorrow, I hope to understand myself and fit myself within this puzzle of a culture.

Or find a way to make myself into someone that can. I hope to see a public transit extended to the tri-county area and no more rent hikes; I hope to continue to see the stubbornness of Charleston residents to stay in their city. In the future I hope residents use patience regarding the changes that await us, but weary of mass corporations and tax incentives to the lucky few. Personally, I hope next year to be on one of those stupid columns in the post that say, hey, this guy is special to this town for this specific reason because he is just so good.

Hey, maybe I will even find a real job by then.

Meet the TINY Business

TINYisPOWERFUL involve Artists, Cultural Workers,
Youth and Tiny Business partners:

to support and promote TINY BUSINESS, as a
vital part of commerce and neighborhood

to fully embrace THE ARTS AND THE SPIRIT OF
THE ARTS as activators of sustainability

to build a mentorship legacy and awaken in YOUTH
a spirit of agency and community engagement

We believe that ART & TINY BUSINESS are nimble, adaptable, profitable,
for the people and that BELONGING means celebrating many histories and
cultures and BECOMING all we can TOGETHER.

THAT IS WHY:

we experiment, we research

we exchange skills, we teach each other

we take personal responsibility in partnership and collaboration

we stand for environmental justice and socio/economic equity

we denounce the negative cultural impacts of gentrification

we amplify the voices of disadvantaged, low wealth and historically
marginalized communities

we share ownership of our work and imagine new policies

For us collaboration means reciprocity, shared ownership and
autonomy.

conNECKtedTOO → TINYisPOWERFUL

**Want more content
from Charleston and
the greater area?
Then look out for more**

843?

**And checkout
TINYisPOWERFUL.org
for more content
from TINYisPOWERFUL**