

Tenants Speak Up! Theatre
presents:



BUSCANDO ACCIÓN Y SOLIDARIDAD QUE
TRANSFORME EL ARRENDAMIENTO
¡BASTA!
BUILDING AND STRENGTHENING
TENANT ACTION

www.bastaaustin.org

the sunshine zine
spring 2021

WELCOME!

WELCOME!



Dear friends, this zine was created for you by us at Tenants Speak Up! Theatre*. We are a performance and advocacy group made up of renters in Austin. We envision a future where the collective action of Austin renters has brought healthy and affordable housing to all.

In this zine, we offer messages of solidarity and care as well as invitations to create your own work. May your burdens be lessened, and may you have what you need in these complex times. The small things we do have a ripple effect.

We're all we've got.



WE ARE

We are a voice, creative,
political (damn right, we
are!)

We are tigers, powerful and
precious.

We are survivors, world
changers, we can be a thorn in
the side of Austin City
Council.

We are an asset to our
community.

We are strong.

We are people.

***with contributions from Gathering Ground Theatre**, a theatre and advocacy group made up of Austinites with lived experience of homelessness and their allies.

More information about Tenants
Speak Up! can be found at:
bastaaustin.org

**WANNA JOIN AND HELP US TELL THE
REAL STORY OF BEING A RENTER IN
AUSTIN?**

Call 512.522.3937, message us at
@bastaaustin on FB or IG,
or email us at: art@bastaaustin.org





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For more info text or call

Kate at: 512.522.3937

OR

email us at:

art@bastaaustin.org

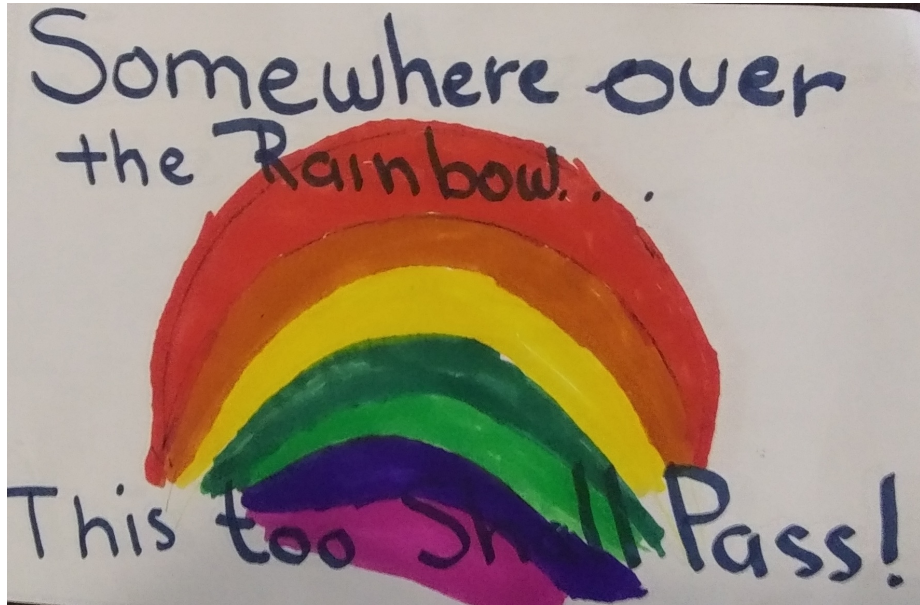
Calling all tenants with a story to tell!

Building and Strengthening
Tenant Action (BASTA) is
hosting a series of digital
Story Circles that will
virtually bring together
renters to share experiences
and explore themes related to
housing justice and community
health in Austin.

No storytelling experience
necessary. We will make sure
every person has the digital
tools and knowledge needed to
participate. A meal will be
delivered to each
participant.

"Permission is granted by the fact of
your breath."
- Rev. angel Kyodo williams

Sharae



Somewhere over
the Rainbow...
This too Shall Pass!

I AM
(1st Stanza)

I am _____
I wonder _____
I hear _____
I see _____
I want _____
I am _____

(2nd Stanza)

I pretend _____
I feel _____
I touch _____
I worry _____
I cry _____
I am _____

(3rd Stanza)

I understand _____
I say _____
I dream _____
I try _____
I hope _____
I am _____

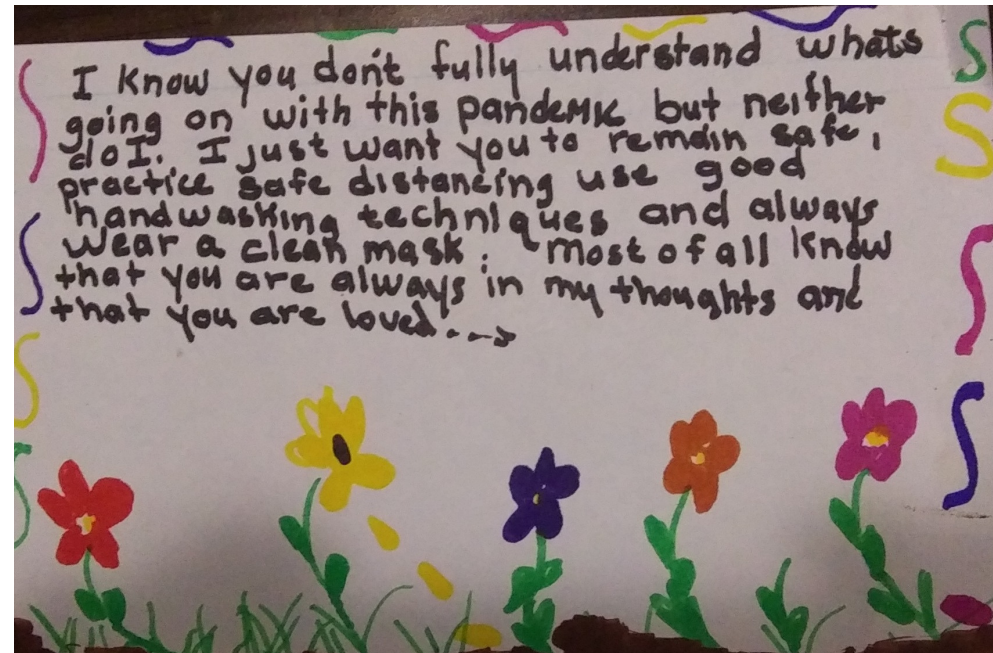
WHAT MAKES YOU YOU?



Write your own "I Am" Poem

*Template by Suzi Mee, Teachers
and Writers Collaborative*

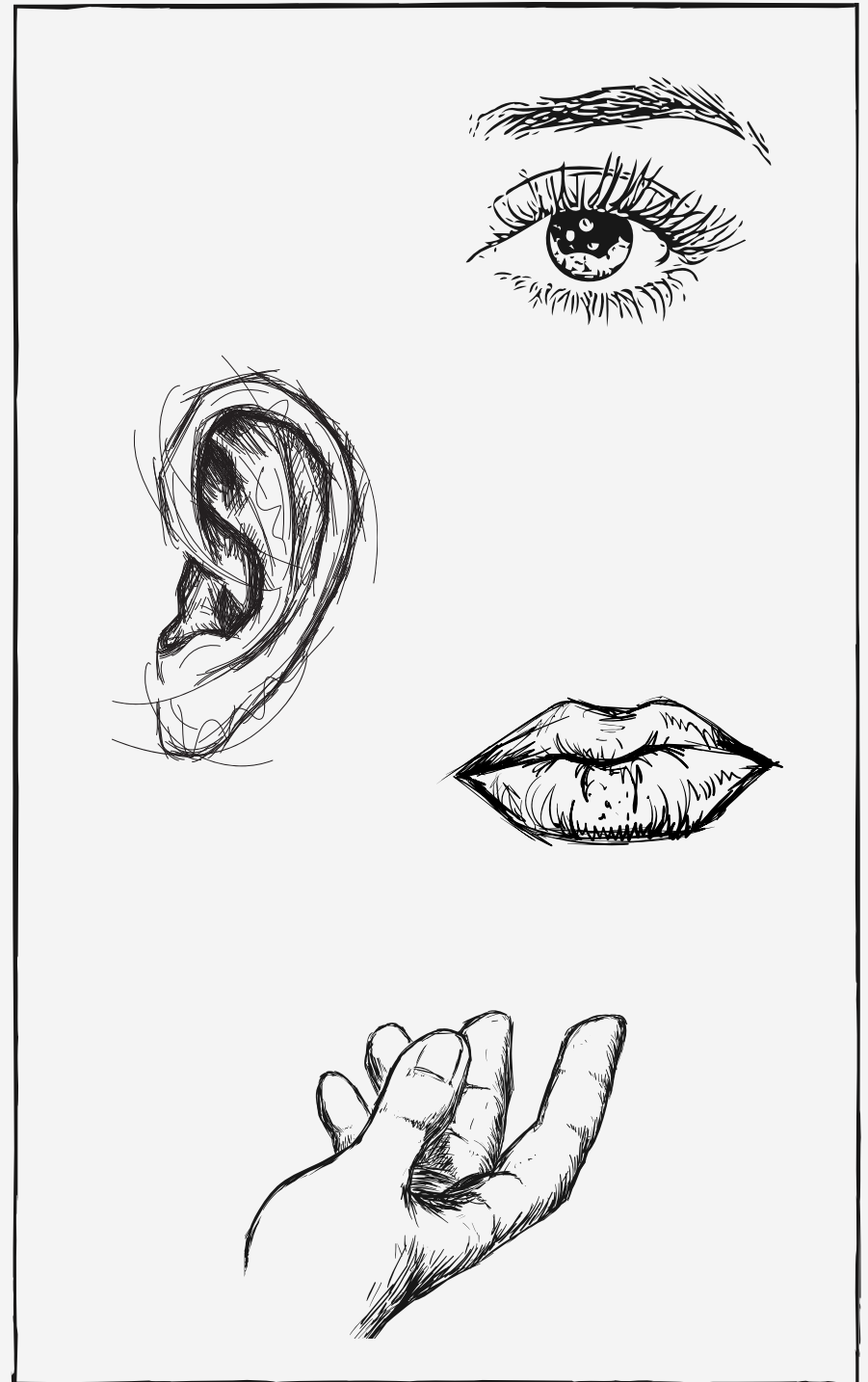
I know you don't fully understand
whats going on with this pandemic
but neither do I. I just want you
to remain safe, practice safe
distancing use good handwashing
techniques and always wear a clean
mask : Most of all know that you
are always in my thoughts and that
you are loved...



Jeanne

DID YOU SEE?

Once I looked and did not see what was before my eyes. I didn't see the homeless, I saw the trash piled up, I didn't see the needs they had, I saw the mess in my neighborhood and next to my highway. I didn't see the people, only everything else around them. Why can't these people work and be productive? The answer is they work and work hard – they work hard to stay alive, they work hard to forgive those of us who cannot or will not see, they work hard to try to help others on the street, they work hard to keep believing.





WHAT'S YOUR VISION OF CARE?

care looks like . . .

care feels like . . .

care sounds like . . .

care tastes like . . .

care grows like . . .

So in my superioress I demanded of God. I asked God why don't you fix this? And God answered -- why don't you? So now I see and I beg forgiveness for my smugness. Now I ask what can I do for you to the homeless, now I do what I can and then I do more. For now I see that we are all one paycheck, one insurmountable object, one blow to many, and one very tiny step from being homeless.

Jeanne

Be A Friend

No one said it would easy
No one said it would be simple
No one said it would be painless
No one said

But what they did say
Or should have said



Life isn't easy
But friends make it easier
Life is complicated
But friends make it simpler
Life is painful
But friends share, so it is less
painful



hold

give

care

Take

receive

So be a friend
Be a good friend
Be available
Be there when needed
Be there even when they tell you to go
Be true even when they are not

You are the one that you answer to
You are the one who knows what you did
You are the one
But God knows

So be a good friend
The kind of friend you want to have
The kind of friend God is
Strive to be the best friend
Then you have done God's work
Then you will have made our Father proud
Then you will have made yourself proud.

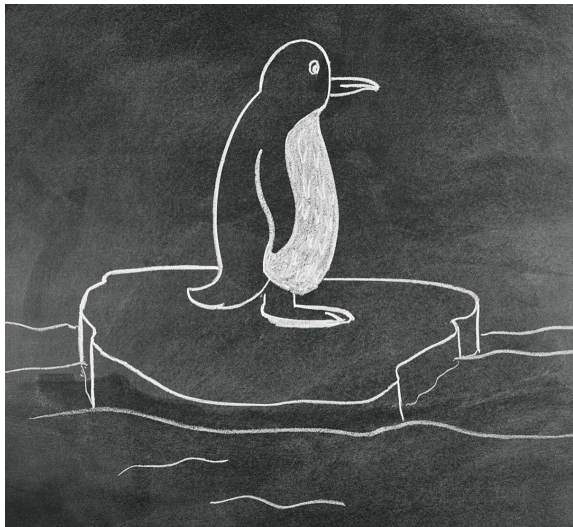
So be a good friend

Steve-O

Penguin wants housing

Then Penguin got the house
Penguin is happy now

He has room for his black and
white tux



Go



WHAT'S YOUR EXPERIENCE?

What has been your experience living through the pandemic? Below are a few prompts to guide you and some space to reflect. Take what works, leave the rest.

The hardest thing about the pandemic has been . . .

The thing that has changed the most in my life since the pandemic . . .

Moments that have been surprising or delightful . . .

Something I've learned about myself . . .

Something I've learned about others . . .

Penguin didn't have a paycheck

but needs more fish

He needs 800 smack a roos every month

Penguin!

Steven

It's such a strange world that we live in now. It's late March, it's overcast. The weather is still cold and grey. Downtown Austin Texas. It's Friday evening, rush hour. Not a moving car in sight. The local popular slogan is "Keep Austin Weird."

But I don't think that THIS is what anybody had in mind. I'm heading to a local convenience store, I pass several darkened shops, all closed. Some are even boarded up. The birds seem to be the only living things in the city, singing their lonely songs, perched on dead branches that are slowly coming back to life. My mind screams, "THIS is the way that it starts in the movies, isn't it?" I push the thought away and move on.



I still find a smile and
things to look to.
But I can no longer hide the
face with my blues
Help will come soon
Better later than never
I've been waiting along time
Why does it seem like its
forever

See the look on my face
We need a rescue
I am a nobody with a hidden
truth
I am a soul who doesn't know
what to do
World full of chaos
How does one stay in-tuned
The pandemic approaches an
impending doom

As I approach Congress Avenue, I look toward the Capitol building. Nothing. I see neither cars nor people. I glance toward the river. There's a few dark moving shapes in the distance, dotted along the sidewalks. I turn the corner and I see that the lights of the convenience store are on. They're actually open! Never has neon and overhead lighting seemed so inviting. I quickly cross the street. As I enter the doors, I find that I'm the only customer. The store clerk looks up, smiles. But I can see the nervous look in his eyes. He clearly DOESN'T want to be here. Despite the comfort and sanity of another living soul, I decide not to stay long. It's getting dark.

The world CHANGES in the dark.

I gather my things and bring them to the register. The sudden mournful wail of a lone police siren. A patrol cruiser flashes by the windows. It's gone just as quickly as it came. The clerk finishes scanning my things. I swipe my card, bag them up, and I'm out the door. The birds have stopped singing. I examine my surroundings again. A few of the dark shapes are closer now. The closest one is just across the street, up the hill on a side street. It's headed in my direction. Had it been following me?

To fight for my rights is
to fight against the
status quo
My will not strong enough
I guess I don't belong
My mind keeps replaying
this same sad song
I cant escape and I cant
backtrace
I'm so far gone no one
can relate

Zaevy Zae

A trouble mind awakens a
trouble soul
Trouble awaits those who
have troubled goals
I was made from clay so I
was birth from a mold
When I lose my innocents
life becomes so dull

I stop moving and watch. "It" is
a man. His hair is mussed. His
clothes are dirty and ruffled.
There's a dark stain on his
shirt. He's moving slowly, but he
isn't shuffling his feet.

He looks up and sees me.

His arms don't reach out,
grasping toward me. He doesn't
moan, he doesn't cry out in a
raspy voice, "BRAAAIIINNSSSSSS".

I begin walking again and we
cross the intersection together,
giving each other some space.

As we cross paths, our eyes meet. I nod my head in greeting, he does the same. And I leave him to HIS fate as he leaves me to mine.

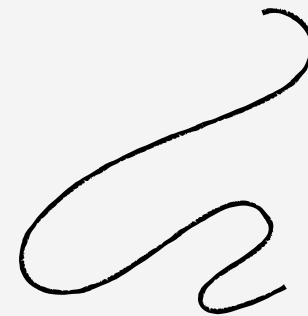
I quickly move up the hill, walking to the bus stop. Thankfully, the buses are still running. The bus will take me north, to relative safety.

I board the bus and leave downtown Austin behind me. I give a quick sigh of relief. I don't want to be downtown at night.

When you bless others, you also bless yourself.

Positivity is a choice, and I choose to be positive.

-Destiny





HOMEless doesn't mean

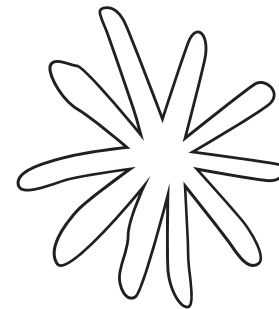
HOPEless,
HELPlless,
or WORTHless.

Always remember that.

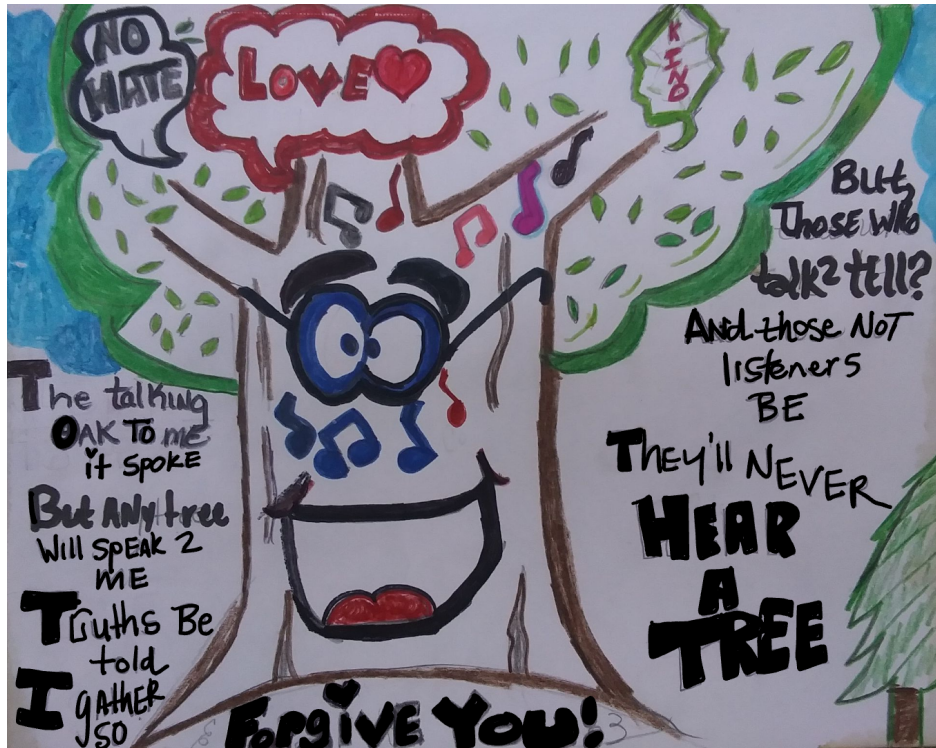
-Steven



THIS is the reality
now. It's such a
strange world that we
live in.



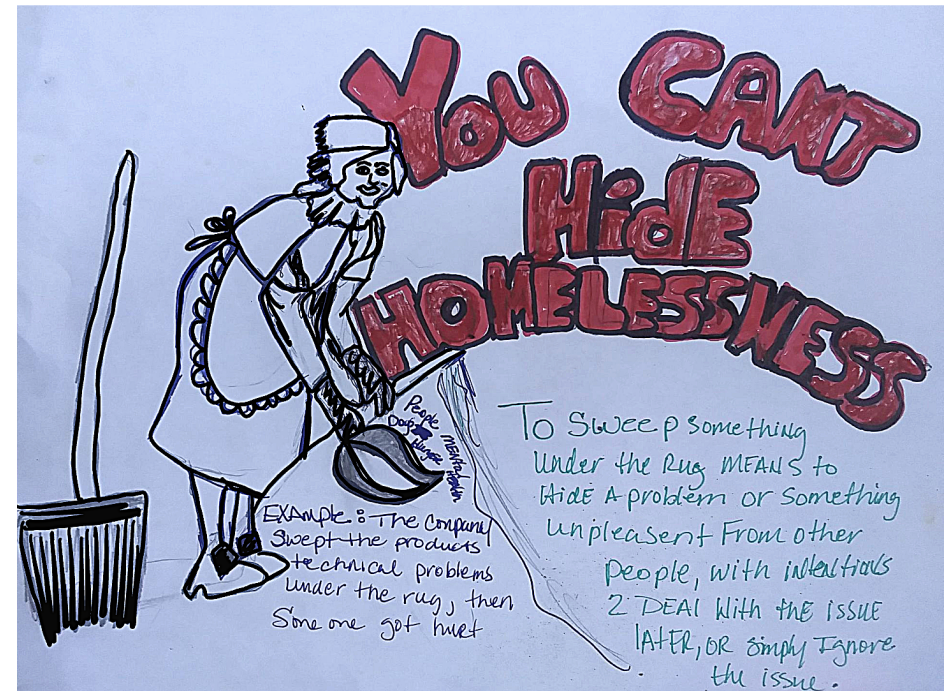
Lisa



The talking oak to me it spoke
But any tree will speak to me
With truths being told
I gather so.
By those who talk to tell?
And those not listeners be,
even if they listen well.
They'll never hear a tree

You can't hide homelessness

To sweep something under the rug means to hide a problem or something unpleasant from other people, with "intentions" to deal with later, or simply ignore the issue.



Example: The company swept the products technical problems under the rug, then someone got hurt.

(under the rug): Poverty, people, life, mental health issues, dogs, futures, hunger