



Embracing peace, exploring collective spirit, and elevating style, **iLL-Literacy** serves up a unique culmination of theater, spoken word poetry, music, and community. Individually, **Dahlak Brathwaite**, **Nico Cary**, **Adriel Luis**, and **Ruby Veridiano-Ching** hold achievements under their belts that include performances throughout the country, dozens of publications and recordings, a feature on HBO's Def Poetry Jam, and poetry slam championships in the youth, college, and adult circuits. Collectively, the four poets compose a family that blesses audiences everywhere with its highly acclaimed collaborative stage performances.

iLL-Literacy is a collective of multidisciplinary artists, organizers, and educators who each specialize in such realms as theatre, movement, literature, graphic design, community development, music production, and academic outreach. The four convene as multitalented individuals towards collective progress. As mentors at **Youth Speaks**, an international non-profit literary arts organization, the members of **iLL-Literacy** conduct youth outreach through creative writing and performance workshops. Gathering their experiences as college students and recent college grads, the collective has also formulated unique performances, and also workshops, aimed at addressing social, academic, and personal issues that are pertinent among college students and young adults.



iLL-Literacy c/o Youth Speaks
2169 Folsom St. #100, San Francisco, CA 94110
Booking: Adriel Luis // E: illbooking@ill-literacy.org // P: 925.998.2090 // W: ill-literacy.org

iLL-Literacy Individual Bios



Self-narrating storyteller, **Nico Cary** has been opening the eyes of audiences ever since his high school days. Now a student at UC Berkeley, Nico continues to paint the Bay Area with his detailed passion for literature and politics. Noticeably mature for his generation, Nico offers new perspectives to familiar ideas. His command over words and captivating performance has taken him to stages throughout California, and he has been a finalist in the Bay Area Teen Poetry Slam Championships for three consecutive years. He is a member of the 2005 UC Berkeley Slam Team.



First born son of a last child, **Adriel Luis** is a nomad of sorts. Collecting twenty-one years worth of stories as a Chinese American uprooted from the Toi San tribe, he understands that for the poet, sense of self is not static, and artistic and spiritual growth never ends. Adriel seeks to be a reflection of his community, demonstrated through his creation of the *YellowBrown Empowerment Project*, a college circuit for Asian Pacific Americans. Adriel has been a Bay Area Teen Poetry Slam finalist for two consecutive years, and is the current San Francisco Poetry Slam Champion.



Ruby Veridiano-Ching finds sage in her writing, as well as the art of others. Constantly eager to explore her external environments, her work captures her world observations. Dedicating her recent years to time spent in Italy, the Philippines, and nooks throughout the country, Ruby brings a breath of new air to the mic. She has found home on various stages, including those of the End-Dependence National Poetry Tour. Passionate about literary art, as well as visual style, she has elevated past the performance scene as the founder and chief editor of *Phlegm*, a new journal documenting the independent arts scenes in California.



With an intense presence on stage, and demanding the same from his audience, **Dahlak Brathwaite** is the newest head-turner in the spoken arts scene. Meshing his writing with his passion for hip-hop, jazz, and theater, Dahlak's performances offer a rare versatility. His ability to captivate the stage has won him two Bay Area Teen Poetry Slam Championships, a National Youth Slam Championship, and three standing ovations during the 2005 filming of HBO's *Def Poetry Jam* in New York. He also currently co-stars in *Scourge*, the headlining feature in the 2005 Hip-Hop Theater Festival in San Francisco.

Current Production: *Approaching Twilight*

Aside from its reputation in the common spoken word scene, **iLL-Literacy** also offers dynamic theme-based stage performances that break artistic barriers with the incorporation of theater, music, multimedia, and movement. **iLL-Literacy's** current production, *Approaching Twilight* is the newest themed set in the collective's rotation. Inspired by Anna Deavere Smith's book and one-person show, *Twilight: Los Angeles 1992*, *Approaching Twilight* discusses ethnic and racial tension in America—with a specific focus on Black and Asian American conflict—by exploring themes rooted in it; the creation of culture, self-hatred, prejudice, and ultimately, resolution. *Approaching Twilight* is a constantly-evolving production, and is constructed to adapt to theater and casual stage environments.

iLL-Literacy Performance & Outreach History

Theaters & Performance Venues

Bimbo's 365 (San Francisco)
Bindlestiff Studio (San Francisco)
Herbst Theater (San Francisco)
The Hothouse (Chicago)
Ivar Theatre (Los Angeles)
Jose Rizal (Saramento)
La Pena (Berkeley)
Mental Graffiti (Chicago)
Oakland Box Theater
Oakland Metro ODC Theater (San Francisco)
The Punch Gallery (San Francisco)
Macla (San Jose)
Oasis (Oakland)
Punch Gallery (San Francisco)
Pusod (San Jose)
ProArts (Oakland)
Redwood Alliance (Occidental, CA)
Revibe (Sacramento)
Shoreline Amphitheater (Mountain View, CA)
Slims (San Francisco)
Somarts (San Francisco)
Taller Puerto Riqueno (Philadelphia)
Urban Sandbox (Chicago)
Varsity Theater (Davis, CA)
Vittum Theatre (Chicago)
Yerba Buena Center for the Arts (San Francisco)

Highlighted Performances

Hip-Hop Theater Festival (Upcoming 2005)
Brave New Voices National Slam (Upcoming 2005)
National Collegiate Slam (Upcoming 2005)
Bay Area Teen Slam Championship (2001-2005)
UC Berkeley Slam Championship (2005)
HBO's Def Poetry Jam (2005)
National Poetry Slam, St. Louis (2004)
Broken English Spoken Word Conference (2004)
Brave New Voices National Youth Slam (2004)
San Francisco Slam Championships (2004)
APIA Spoken Word Summit, Chicago (2003)
End-Dependence Tour (2002-2003)



Colleges & Universities

California State University, Hayward
California State University, Sacramento
Columbia University
Contra Costa College
Cornell University
DePaul University
Modesto College
Santa Clara University
Stanford University
San Francisco State University
University of California, Berkeley
University of California, Davis
University of California, Santa Cruz
University of Illinois, Chicago
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
University of Massachusetts, Boston
University of the Pacific
University of Southern California

High Schools & Youth Outreach Programs

Alameda High School
AP Giannini Middle School (San Francisco)
Balboa High School (San Francisco)
Berkeley High School
CASA Woodland
El Camino High School (South Bay)
El Cerrito High School
Galileo High School (San Francisco)
James Logan High School (East Bay)
Kamehameha High School, Hawai'i Campus
Lowell High School (San Francisco)
McClymonds High School (Oakland)
Pilipino Youth Coalition, Vallejo
Pilipino Youth Coalition, Sacramento
Pilipino Youth Coalition, Union City
Pinole Valley High School
San Lorenzo High School
St. Ignatius High School (San Francisco)
St. Luke's Women's Center (San Francisco)
Treasure Island High School
Westmoor High School (South Bay)
Youth Speaks (San Francisco)

Shared the Stage With...

8th Wonder, Alicia Keys, Beau Sia, Beastie Boys, Blackalicious, Death Cab For Cutie, Denizen Kane, I Was Born With Two Tongues, Ishle Yi Park, Jessica Hagedorn, John Legend, Kanye West, Lauryn Hill, Mango Tribe, Marc Bamuthi Joseph, Meshell Ndgeochello, Mos Def, Russel Simmons, Saul Williams, The Strokes, Violent Femmes, Yeah Yeah Yeahs, Zion I